


THE
REFORMER

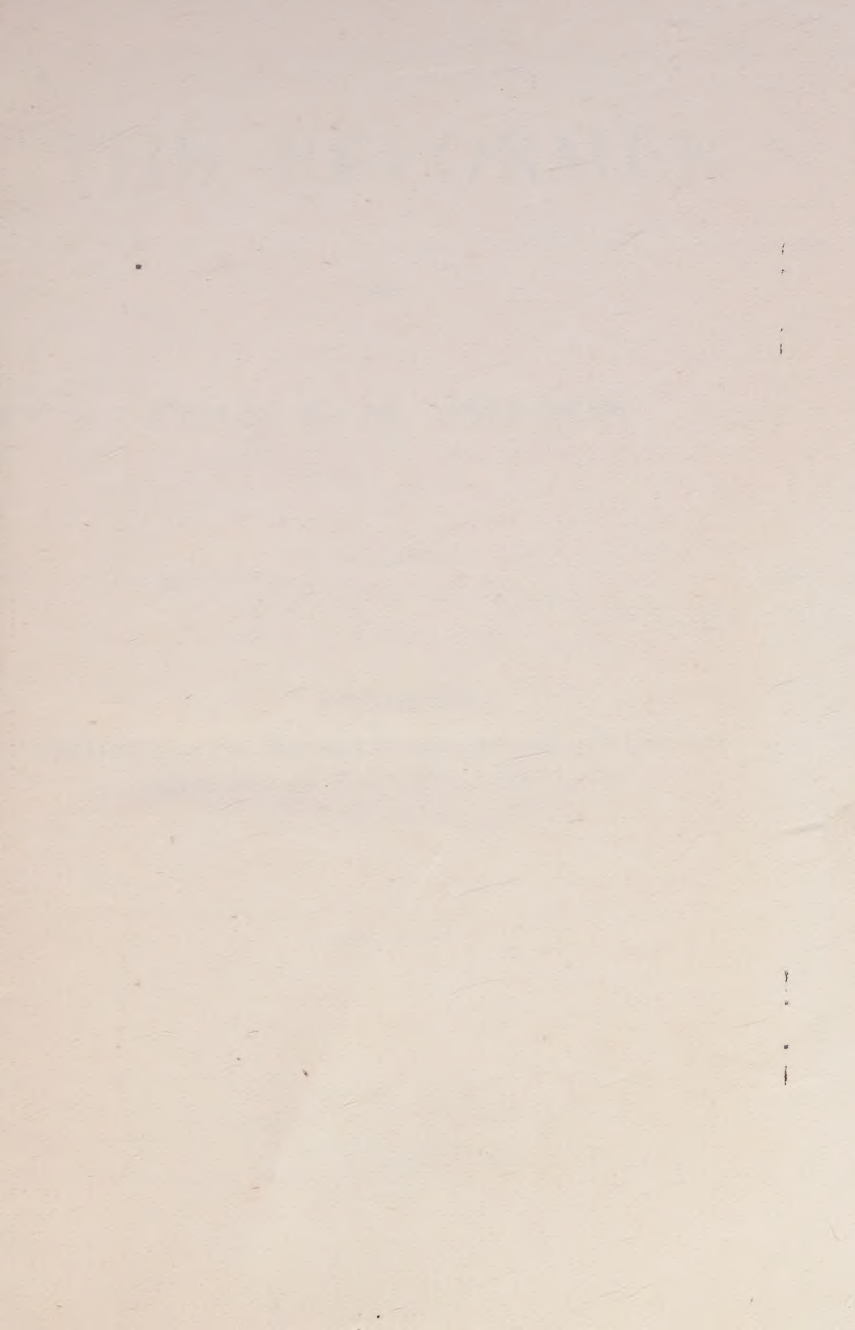
BY
CHARLES
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THE REFORMER

BY

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*In His Steps, His Brother's Keeper, John King's Question
Class, Edward Blake, Born to Serve, Etc.*

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THE REFORMER

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PREFACE.

This story does not attempt to cover the work of the social settlement. If it seems in any way to give a picture of social settlement work it is only incidental to the main purpose, which is to call attention to the tenement house problem in connection with the social settlement. The work done by Hull House, Chicago Commons, and other well known social settlements in the cities of America, is so varied and so far reaching in its character that any attempt to describe it in a story would call for a wide treatment which this little story does not attempt. This preface is in the nature of a hint to the reader not to criticise what was not intended by the writer. The only serious purpose in the story is a genuine desire to call attention to certain well known evils connected with the housing of the people in the large cities. If its purpose is in any way productive of results in awakening, not the conscience of the settlements, which is already thoroughly aroused, but that of the general public, the writer will feel more than repaid.

For the illustrations in this volume the publishers and author are indebted to the courtesy of "The City Homes Association," publishers of the volume entitled "Tenement Conditions in Chicago;" no artist's illustrations could tell the story of the facts so well as these photographs.

Charles M. Sheldon

Central Church, Topeka, Kansas, 1902.


FOREWORD

The first of the two volumes of this work is a history of the United States from the time of the discovery of the continent to the present. It is a history of the people, of their institutions, of their progress, and of their struggles. It is a history of the nation as a whole, and of the various states and territories that have formed it. It is a history of the past, and of the present, and of the future. It is a history of the people, and of the land, and of the sea. It is a history of the nation, and of the world. It is a history of the human race, and of the universe.



THE REFORMER.

CHAPTER I.

HE great city rose about him like a mountain with a multitude of ambiguous canyons leading off into unexplored distances. The roar of its traffic was persistent and spoke in various voices the language of bitter toil, of physical energy, and of careless pleasure-seeking. At no time in all his life had he seemed to feel the burden of his responsibility for others as at this moment. He had come to the place where he could no longer endure the strife between duty and inclination, between personal ease and personal ministry to a world that offered him little expectation of reward as he ministered to it. The struggle which had led up to his final precipitation of the crisis had been a struggle almost empty of bitterness but overflowing with pain. He was conscious as he stood on the steps of his father's house, about to turn his back on all the traditions of his father's name and business, that there was no hatred in his soul and no resentment in his heart. What he was about to leave did not find as much place in his mind as what he was about to seek. He was not troubled over any loss to himself, but he faced with a deep seriousness worthy of the event, certain well defined questions relative to his future.

As he finally went down the steps and became a part of the human current that flowed down the street, the city seemed to absorb him into its turbulent mysteriousness and to bear him along, a part of its restlessness, a portion of its eternal destiny.

* * * * *

Rufus Gordon looked over at his son.

"I don't see that the trip has hurt you any. You look heartier, John, than I ever saw you before."

"It has been a great trip for me, father," replied John Gordon, returning his father's look earnestly. "And I am very grateful to you for it. The ocean voyage toned me up wonderfully."

"Just what you needed,"—the older man spoke with a heartiness that seemed to cause the younger to shrink back a little in his chair as if in anticipation of something different. "I remember the first time I went across, I was just about as much run down as you were when you finished at the University. Six months in Germany and Switzerland made a new man of me. But we've missed you, John. Mary and I."

John Gordon looked out of the window before he answered.

"You've been very kind to me. You have always been kind to me. All that makes it hard for me to say something I ought to say."

The father looked sharply at the son and there was a moment's pause.

"Well, go on," Rufus Gordon said, as his son seemed to wait for him to speak.

"In the first place—" John Gordon began slowly—"I must refuse your offer of a position in the bank. I cannot by any possibility accept it."

There was another expressive silence between the two men, and Rufus Gordon shut his lips firmly together, while his face hardened gradually.

"I received your letter just before sailing from Liverpool, father," John Gordon continued, "and I believe I appreciate your plan for my future. But it is all impossible. I am going to disappoint you in every particular; but that is because you cannot understand—"

Rufus Gordon made no movement of any kind, not even when his son stopped abruptly and looked over at him as if expecting a reply. To one who knew him as his son did, the utter absence of any sign of emotion, in the face of what was in reality a tremendous blow at his family pride, indicated simply the hard, unyielding nature of the man.

"Of course I don't expect you to understand—I anticipate nothing. But you have brought me up to tell the truth, and I am simply telling it now as it must be told, when I say that I can not and will not accept the life you mapped out for me in your letter. It would be worse than mockery for me to attempt such a career. It would be death to my whole nature. It would cut across every principle of my life, every conviction that has ever prompted me to be of use in the world."

Rufus Gordon finally spoke after his son had been silent a long time.

"We've been over all this more or less before. I hoped your trip abroad would take some of your foolishness out

of you. It seems it hasn't. Well, what do you expect to do?"

The question was blunt,—it was more,—it was brutal.

John Gordon rose and began walking up and down. His father sat looking at him coldly but curiously, as if studying some peculiar characteristic that for the first time had begun to affect him.

"Father!" John Gordon finally exclaimed, "You will never understand my choice. I wondered all the way home whether it was worth while to try to explain myself. But you have a right to know why I refuse your offer and why I make choice of the career I must follow."

Rufus Gordon gave no sign of assent, but his son went on speaking with growing feeling that at times rose into genuine passion; yet at no point did he lose control of himself either in voice or in manner.

"I am not judging you, father, when I say that a life that is content to expend its greatest energies in money making is a life that has not only no attractions for me but it has a positive repulsion. To spend the day in a competitive strife that seeks to get more and more, largely at the expense of the weak and helpless, to spend night after night in dressing up in fine clothing and being amused, to live only with those select companions who are able to dress and eat as well as we are, to be practically ignorant of, and absolutely indifferent to the conditions of thousands of human beings in this great city, to have no ideals higher than a commercial standard and no passions beyond the physical appetites,—all this is a growing horror to me. We live in a beautiful house—" John Gordon glanced around the room, which was furnished with elegance and great good taste, with only here and there

a suggestion of a barbaric lapse into the vulgarity of over-display. "We have servants, carriages, yachts, summer residences, luxuries of all descriptions. Out of all the wealth of our lives we give a fraction of income to so-called charity. We are all three of us church members. We pay a large sum nominally to church expenses. We do not give anything of our personal lives or personal enthusiasm to church or Christian work. The whole of our family life has revolved about ourselves, our eating, dressing, entertaining, and money making. What have we ever done for this city where we live? How much of service representing real sacrifice have we ever given to help solve any of its real human problems? We live from day to day as if there were no such thing in America as poverty, or intemperance, or injustice, or inequality, or greed, or child murder. The wealth that buys things seems to be our daily god. The prayers we say in church have no meaning because we do not mean them. The very charity we dispense is an act of proxy which represents no thought, no sacrifice, and no human affection. We give because it is customary, or as a means of silencing (God pity us) our waking consciences, that in spite of us sometimes remind us that there is a human brotherhood. Day after day with monotonous treadmill-regularity follow one function after another, receptions, teas, theaters, concerts, gaieties, self, self, self, while the city grows up in its political life, rotten, vile, uncared-for by the money-grubbers so long as too much black-mail is not levied on the business in which we are engaged. Practically we have said all these years to this city where our money has been made, 'We care nothing for your real life. All that we want out of you is a living for ourselves—a luxu-

rious living. Let the preachers and the philanthropists and the professional reformers see to all the painful and disagreeable details of human misery and social wrong. We are too busy with our money making to be disturbed by cries for justice or righteousness. Father, you know this is the sort of life you plan for me to perpetuate. Your ambition for me is to have me enter the bank, to become an expert in finance, to marry and manage a luxurious, proud exclusive establishment, and train my children to follow on in the same path, keeping the name of the Gordons as a social and financial word to speak in the city and in select circles as a synonym for distinguished wealth and high breeding unmixed with any vulgar association with common humanity. I say such a career fills me with horror. I feel as if all these years I had been living under the condemnation of an angry God. And I can not and I will not any longer live such a life. You have no right to ask me to do it. I have no right to attempt it."

"Is that your answer to my question? I asked you what you were going to do."

Rufus Gordon had not moved a muscle during his son's talk and he spoke now in an easy contemptuous manner.

John Gordon came up to the side of the table opposite his father and looked keenly across at him. Then he turned away and went over by one of the great windows and looked out on the fashionable avenue. When he finally turned around and faced his father again, he was astonished to see him rising from his chair and coming over towards him. In all his knowledge of his father John Gordon had never known him before to exhibit so much

feeling. Probably neither man fully understood the event. Afterwards in going over the scene, John Gordon could not avoid a feeling of suspicion as to its genuineness, but he had never known his father to play a part and, in fact, considered him quite incapable of it.

However that may be, Rufus Gordon now began an appeal to his son that for the time being had considerable influence over him.

"John," he began, holding out his hands, although when the son stepped forward as if to meet him affectionately he dropped his arms quickly to his sides. "You are my only son, and I—depend on you. It has been the ambition of my life to see you succeeding to the place which I now occupy. I do not understand what you have just been saying. It has no meaning to me. In that sense, what you say is very true,—we can never understand each other. But you would have independence in the position I offer you and for which you have been trained. If you wanted to experiment in these matters of social problems, as you call them, you would have the money and your place in society to help you. But if you step outside the circle to which we belong you will have no standing and no influence. But it is not clear to me yet what your plans are, in case you finally decide to reject my plans for you."

He stopped suddenly, and John Gordon, looking eagerly and with growing astonishment into his father's face, noted for the first time signs of growing age in the deep wrinkles about the eyes, the bent shoulders, and a slight but noticeable shaking of one hand as the long white fin-

gers fumbled at the watch chain. He had never before entertained the idea that his father was an old man. Rufus Gordon had always been so upright of carriage, so firm and steady on his feet, so decided in his movements, that none of his acquaintances had yet thought of age in their thought of him. What he now saw had something to do with the manner in which John Gordon answered his father's question.

"My plans, father? I have none, that is, none that you would call by that name. Perhaps as far as I have gone, my plans are summed up in my love for the people."

"Love for the people?" Rufus Gordon repeated the words and took a step towards his son. "You love the people then more than your old father. For the people you would do what you would not do for me! And who are the people? Masses of the envious, the desperate, the thriftless, the irresponsible. Are we to blame for their condition? You talk of social wrongs. But who make them possible but the people themselves?"

John listened in astonishment. In all their conversation his father had never before spoken so. There was a strain almost of mildness in his manner.

"John," he continued with a softening of accent and manner that deepened the son's astonishment. "You cannot do anything. I said I did not understand you or your motives. I know enough, however, to know that if you go out into the world to do the things of which you dream, you will miserably fail, and the result will be pain and disgrace for me, for us all. I love you, John. Perhaps you have not known this. But—"

Rufus Gordon suddenly paused, looked irresolutely at his son and then turned and walked back to the place where he had been sitting by the table. When he lifted his face again towards John Gordon it was the same cold, proud, hard face with which he had listened to his son's indictment of his own and his father's social selfishness.

John Gordon was so confused by this scene and his father's manner that he stood irresolutely silent by the window. The whole incident seemed fantastically unreal, it was so unlike any thing his father had ever done before. He had just turned from the window to speak, when a voice in the next room began to sing,

"The sadness that grows with the years,
Is a sadness that will not depart,
It is close to the fountain of tears,
For it lies at the depth of the heart."

The singer appeared at the doorway and called out in a clear but somewhat hard tone.

"John, will you go with me this evening? Mr. Penrose sends word that he cannot go owing to a sudden summons out of town."

"What is it, Mary?" John Gordon spoke affectionately.

"Ravoll in 'The Edge of The Sword.'"

John Gordon looked grave, and his sister swiftly noted his hesitation.

"What's the matter with you, John? Since you returned from abroad you act so queer. Don't you want to go with me? Ravoll is perfectly splendid in the part."

"The play is—" John Gordon hesitated to characterize

it. In reality it was rotten in its whole ethical purpose and teaching.

"Every body goes," Mary exclaimed petulantly. "Of course if you won't go with me, it will spoil my evening. I had been expecting it so."

Rufus Gordon spoke.

"I'll go with you, Mary, if you want me to."

"Oh, will you? That's a good father!" She turned toward him but looked over her shoulder at her brother with a gesture of rejection.

John Gordon looked at the two in silence that registered in his mind what had practically become the most painful experience of his whole life—the growing knowledge of his estrangement from all his home loves. "But I have chosen," he kept saying to himself. "I have chosen. I cannot go back now." The trifling incident of the theatre and his sister's misunderstanding of his attitude towards it was only a single illustration out of a hundred other things that made the whole social career unbearable to him. The fact that this particular play was distinguished by the acting of the most brilliant actor of the age, did not relieve the **play** itself of the condemnation that rested upon it for being too impure and suggestive for any self-respecting man or woman to behold its movement on the stage. Yet the wealth and fashion and culture of the city applauded the acting and praised the actor. The press contained columns of commendation for the scenery, the costumes, the spirited presentation from an artistic and dramatic point of view and a mild sentence or two of rebuke for the character of the play itself.

What more could one ask by way of allurements to go and see and hear something which was a little doubtful in its moral setting but splendid in its physical and intellectual sweep of power?

Mary had risen and was going back into the other room singing gaily,

“For it lies at the depth of the heart,”
when John Gordon spoke again.

“Father, will you wait here a few moments? I wish to have a little talk with Mary. And I would like to finish our conference,” he hesitated, but Rufus Gordon answered as he went over to a writing desk—“I’ll be here when you are through.” He sat down and began to write, while John and Mary went together into the next room.

“Mary, I want to talk seriously with you,” John Gordon began as Mary commenced to sing in a mocking tone, “The sadness that grows with the years—”

“No! No! Listen to me once, just this once, Mary, with seriousness. You know we have played together and lightly treated the world all these years. But it cannot go on forever. I have come to a place, Mary, where I must choose between father and you, and the work of my life. It is no playing matter now.”

“Why! What are you going to do?”

It was the same question his father had asked and it presented again the same mental difficulty to John Gordon. If his father failed to understand his son’s motives, his sister was, if anything, far less capable of knowing what her brother had in mind.

“I am going—I am going to—God help me, I do not

yet know all—but I cannot live this life any longer. What do we do, Mary, but make play time of life! And the people are beginning to wake up from their sleep of the ages and stretch their limbs with more and more consciousness of power. We shall be playthings to them, if we do not love them and go to work. That is all we shall be fit for—playthings—that is all we have ever done—play, and it is murder to play all the time in a world like ours.”

“What’s the matter with you, John? What makes you act so? You talk like one of the Socialists, those horrid men that are always making so much fuss about rich people and-and-all that.” Mary spoke with a touch of petulance as near excitement or anger as she generally became under strong temptation.

“I am one, Mary,” replied John Gordon quietly.

“What, a Socialist! You! John Gordon!” The girl spoke in genuine astonishment. And with a gesture of real fear, she moved away and stood looking at him as if seeing something new and strange in him.

“You don’t need to be afraid of me, Mary,” John said with a slight smile. “I can’t explain it all to you. But all my views have changed within the last few months. It is not possible for me to continue the business that father has built up. He has been so deeply set upon it that I know that my refusal to make his plans my own has angered him beyond forgiveness. You know father well enough to know that I cannot expect any thing from him in the way of encouragement in the career I have planned.”

“Why, you have not told me at all what you plan to do!” exclaimed his sister hopelessly.

"I am going to work for the people! I am going to—"

John Gordon paused as a vision of his future, mist-like, but in rugged outline, grew on the screen of his imagination. "The people," there they were, ignorant, some of them, but hourly rising into a desperate intelligence, that undirected would prove their own and the city's destruction, "the people," toiling, sweating, acting figures in the great human drama that were neither supernumeraries nor leading parts, but so vital to the whole movement of the tragedy that it all was destined to sweep onto its final act with them as resultant cause—the "people," vague but certain, full of unwritten histories but making all history possible, and bearing in their faces and their attitude the weal or woe of republics—the "people"—driven in herds one day, leading the masses the next—while all problems of life surged up and down the thronging highways, entanglements caused by murderous greed, by inherited customs, by the physical passions that know no education of refinement due to civilization—the "people" born of the soil but moulded by the city, some of them to starve and riot and drink, and grow indifferent to the very wrongs that made them what they were; and he, John Gordon, the son of Rufus Gordon the great financier, the man of "deals" and "combines" and "operations," and he, John Gordon, was going to devote his young manhood to the "people," to the training and directing of these misdirected masses, because (he smiled at its strange possibility) because he had grown to love them, a love taught him by personal religious experience, so real, so profound, that he knew it dug a gulf as deep as space between his father and his sister and himself. Nothing

but a similar experience on their part could ever fill the gulf, nothing but a similar miracle of regeneration could ever make him understood by them.

Mary had gone over to the piano and was humming the tune she had been singing when she interrupted the talk between father and brother. After a moment John Gordon went over and put his hand on his sister's shoulder.

"All through?" she said, turning about from the piano.

There were tears in John Gordon's eyes as he looked down at her. When he spoke it was very gently:

"It all means of course, that I am going away. Do you understand that, Mary? This will not be my home any more. It will not be possible for me to live here and do—"

"It's all very strange to me, John," said his sister. "You have every chance in the world and you prefer to throw it away for—for a lot of people who don't care."

"They will care."

"What good if they do, John!" His sister suddenly turned towards him very much as his father had, and laid her hand on his arm. "John, the people will not care. What can you do? Surely we are not to blame for all the wrong in this city. I heard what you said to father. It is simply absurd to think that we are responsible for the way things go. And it is nonsense to think you can do any thing. Think how it will look in print. John Gordon, the Reformer! John Gordon, the Socialist!"

"Don't, Mary! It will all be hard enough without your sneer."

"I did not mean to sneer." She seemed honestly grieved, and he instantly leaned over and kissed her cheek. But even as he did so he knew she had turned away from him a little, and when he raised his head she did not look up nor return his caress. He still stood by her silently, realizing each moment more keenly the chasm that stretched between them owing to his religious experience.

"Where are you going to live? You say you cannot live here with us any more?" his sister finally asked.

"I don't know."

"Will you live with the people?"

"It is possible."

"It is absurd. I don't understand."

"You cannot." He said it with a sadness that realized the futility of explanations.

"And of course Luella will go with you! She is such a lover of the people!"

"Luella!"

"You have forgotten her?"

"No!" And yet he had—at least he had absorbed all his thought for the time in his home relations, and had not reckoned on facing this question of the relation which would exist between himself and the woman who had promised to be his wife when he had asked her as John Gordon, son of Rufus Gordon. What would she say now, to John Gordon, Reformer?

He sat down and put his hands over his face while Mary watched him curiously, very much as his father had done.

"Luella is very proud. Still she might enjoy living in the slums and studying problems. She is full of contradictions."

"That is true." John Gordon whispered to himself as he lifted up his face.

"Luella thinks a good deal of you, John."

"That is true, too," he whispered to himself again.

"Still, when you think how Luella has been brought up you can't be surprised if she should refuse to do some things—especially if they mean loss of social standing. Love must be reasonable."

"And unreasonable," said John Gordon with a faint smile. "'Love beareth all things.'"

Mary Gordon stared at her brother. "Of course, any thing is possible. But—Luella—"

She smiled to herself and then stared at her brother and then carelessly turned about and began to sing,

"Oh, the sadness that grows with the years."

John Gordon turned towards the other room, but before he had gone out, Mary rose and came quickly up to him.

"This is not good bye, John?"

"Yes," He turned and looked at her earnestly.

"Of course—" she hesitated, "of course the reason I don't show more feeling is because I cannot believe you are really going to leave us for good. You will try the reforming business a little while and after you have learned that you cannot do any thing, you will come back and let father work out his plan for you, which I must say is far more sensible than what you propose. So I don't intend to say

good bye, John. And I hope Luella will be as good to you as I am."

She instantly went back to the piano and sat down and began to play and sing gaily. John Gordon looked at her for a moment, then went into the other room and found his father still writing there. He came up to the desk and waited until his father laid down his pen.

"Well?" he said as he lifted his head and looked up at his son. "You have something more to say?"

There was not a hint in the tone or manner to suggest to John Gordon any affection or feeling. He was not surprised. He had not expected anything. But he put out his hand towards his father almost like one who is sinking and sees some floating object swept out of reach on a receding wave.

"You understand, father, that I do not ask anything of you. Grandmother's share of the Waller estate is due me next year. I will take care of myself until then."

Rufus Gordon did not speak, and John Gordon continued,

"All this—my action is and always will be strange to you, father. The religious experience through which I passed while abroad makes any other course impossible for me. As I said to you before, the life we have been living in this city seems now to be a monstrous life for civilized people to live. The term Christian has no meaning at all unless it means service, sacrifice, sharing in some real sense with the world's needs. The civilization which means simply getting all it can out of the world, instead of putting all it can into it, is a civilization that cannot

be called Christian. My soul is unable to rest, my life cannot go on with such contradictions torturing it. That is the reason, father, that our ways divide. Would to God we could see and walk together!"

The cry was wrung from him by a sharp and sudden pain that took account of the fact of blood kinship. It was the cry of human fellowship, the exclamation of a personality that had always placed great stress on the value of companionship. But there was no answering cry from the man who sat coldly looking at him. Rufus Gordon was a father; but he was also that personification of the net product of unchristian business methods—he was crystalized selfishness—none the less selfish because civilized, all the more selfish because it was more effective in civilized form. Ignorant self is not so destructive as educated self.

"Is there anything more?" Rufus Gordon asked the question as a business proposition to close an interview that was taking valuable time needed for more important transactions.

"Nothing more except that I hope you will—you will not bear any hard feeling towards me. Oh father!" John Gordon suddenly exclaimed, taking a step towards the impassive figure, "You said you loved me! Cannot you believe in me and the life I have chosen?"

For a moment over the hard face there swept a tremor. It was gone in a moment and Rufus Gordon answered slowly,

"You have chosen. When you change your mind you may come and see me about it."

"I shall never change my mind."

“That is all then?”

“Yes, except that my love for you and Mary is still the same. Sometime, when you have felt what I have, you will believe as I do.”

Rufus Gordon made no answer, and John Gordon slowly turned to leave the room.

“I will arrange to have my things taken over to Barton’s, I am going to stay with him until I arrange for my permanent quarters.”

He left the room and went up stairs, where he busied himself with packing the few possessions he had brought home with him from abroad. During it all, his highly imaginative and even poetical nature took account of the prosaic and matter of fact way in which he was taking leave of the house where he was born, and of the home in which he had been reared. There had been no melodramatic disinheritance of him by his father, although he knew him well enough to know that the life he had chosen, directly contrary to his father’s life long wishes, practically swept him outside the financial thought, so far as Rufus Gordon was concerned. The impossibility of staying in a home where all its acts were acts of disobedience to the greatest rule of life was what made the removal of John Gordon absolutely imperative. That this removal was taking place without the outward spoken words of tragedy made the real action no less real or painful.

When he finally came down stairs he found no one in the house. At first he felt strangely oppressed. Afterwards he felt relieved. He had chosen his life, as he had said, and his choice had seriously begun. As he laid his

hand on the door to open it the consciousness of his uncertainty regarding Luella Marsh swept out of his thought even the sense that he was actually bidding good bye to the home he had known for thirty years. Would this woman he loved as never in all his life before—would she choose the life he had chosen? She was rich, or her father was. She was gifted, an aristocrat by birth and training, a woman of strong and original personality, with many impulses not yet known even to John Gordon. He was almost startled at the sudden realization that he was in ignorance concerning her actual character so far as the present crisis was concerned. Yet he knew that according to her answer now would depend the shaping of his own future. They had become engaged while he was in his last year at the University. Then he had gone abroad, and their correspondence had evidently deepened their respect and affection. He had written her of his religious experience—not in detail, but her answers had apparently satisfied him. His choices, ambitions, longing for service had all followed so tumultuously on the event of his religious crisis that he had not ventured to say to her in letters what he had begun to experience as a profound conviction. Every moment now, therefore, he felt with growing astonishment, confronted him with an unknown problem, although the woman in all the world to him was at the heart of all that was great and possible.

He opened the door and stepped out. The roar of the city smote his senses with new meaning, as he went down the steps and entered the stream of the city's life. He would go at once to Luella Marsh. Whatever it was to be

for him, suspense was not bearable. Hitherto he had emphasized his own love for her. Henceforth he must know to what extent she loved him. For Humanity had now become a part of the creed of his life, and the woman who was to share all with him must love Humanity as well as—himself. The people,—he was one of them now—would she love him as such? Or would she cling to the traditional selfishness of her social position?

Thus John Gordon, as he turned his back on his father's house, faced his future, as the human current bore him on, its destiny irrevocably woven into his own.

CHAPTER II.



ARE you quite sure you understand the situation, Luella?"

John Gordon asked the question gravely, but his look did not betray any anxiety yet. He had been talking with Luella Marsh for several minutes. Her face also was grave, almost solemnly so, but there was a growing expression of uneasiness upon it as she turned her head towards her lover.

"I think so—yes—" she said slowly.

"In other words you mean no," said John Gordon smiling slowly.

Luella Marsh returned the smile and then became instantly grave again.

"I would like to ask you a few more questions, may I?"

"Of course."

"Then I don't know that I am quite clear in my mind as to your exact reasons for leaving your own home. Will you try to make me understand that?"

"Luella,—” he paused and for the first time a fear grew upon him that he was going to fail to make her understand the real crisis in his life. Was this the attitude of the woman who would prove to be the companion he would need, would she hesitate and demand all these

proofs and reasons, all these explanations? And yet he felt the need of her, she had thus far satisfied him, and as he faced her now there was only one prayer in his heart, and that was, that she would finally cast in her lot with his and say "where thou goest I will go, thy people shall be my people and thy God my God."

He began his explanation while Luella leaned her chin on her hand and watched him with deepening seriousness.

"I am thirty years old. From the time of my birth I have been used to every luxury. I have enjoyed all the elegant comforts of a rich, exclusive, proud family. My father's ambition, as you know, has always been the ambition of a man who has lived a life as remote from the common people as if he had been born on some other world. I have grown up in this atmosphere. I have known as little of the people and their real life as my father. Up to the time of my religious experience I cared as little for the people as I knew about them. Since that experience my whole object in living has changed. I find myself longing to know the people as much as I already love them. It is not enough that I love them at a distance. I must know from close personal experience their daily life. As near as possible I must partake of their sorrows, their privations, their misery. Do not answer me yet,"—John Gordon eagerly restrained a movement on Luella's part to interrupt with a word.—"Why should I not do this, I who have all my life tasted the luxury of soft and easy physical living? There is only one thing for me to do if I accomplish my life's ambition now, and that is to leave the surroundings that are so completely op-

posed to all the life of the people I have come to love, in order that I may know if possible, as well as love with intelligent power to help."

"And you ask me to leave my home, as you leave yours?"

She did not look at him while asking the question but in the silence that followed before he replied she turned her face full towards him. His answer came very calmly but his voice in spite of him trembled a little.

"The woman who becomes my wife will make her home with me. We shall share alike whatever the future contains."

It was perhaps at this moment that Luella Marsh had her first glimpse into John Gordon's real character. She had never given him credit for much imagination or poetic feeling. In reality he had a great deal of both. But she did not change her position of serious thoughtfulness. She only turned her head a little as she said,

"Where do you intend to make your home? Will you tell me in detail?"

"I have not fully decided. Probably in Hope House."

"And you expect me to live with you there?"

"If you marry me,—yes." John Gordon spoke with effort. His fear had grown with every word she uttered, with every new question she put to him.

"I will never—" she began, and rose to her feet. Gordon rose instantly.

"Wait a moment!" she sat down and motioned him to be seated. "Wait! I want to think awhile."

She put her hands over her face and John Gordon

watched and waited. His heart was hungry for the love of her but his soul trembled for what he thought was to be her decision. As the minutes went by and she still made no motion his conviction deepened that his knowledge of her character and motives was superficial. All that he really knew was to some degree the strength of her personality. He knew she would not be moved by pleading. If she would not go with him out of a love that pleaded its own cause, John Gordon knew that no other motive would prevail.

When she finally lifted her head she put her hands behind her and looked full and frank into his face. But what she said surprised him at first until he saw its bearing on her final answer.

"You used the word 'people,' a good many times in what you said about your reasons for leaving your father's house. Tell me what you mean by it."

"By the word?" he was doubtful as to her meaning.

"Yes, just what do you mean by saying you are moved by a love for the 'people'?"

"I mean the masses. The multitudes. The people, the humanity that works with its hands for a living, the humanity that toils at the furnace and the loom and the machine, the humanity that lives on days' wages, and lives to produce the things that give persons like you and me pleasure, that we say we must have for our luxurious tastes—Luella!" John Gordon spoke for the first time with the same passion he had used in the interview with his father, a passion that sounded the new note of his redeemed manhood.

"What have we known or cared for humanity? Our days have been wasted in selfish and foolish gratification of the senses, while these our brothers and sisters have been not only uncared-for by us, but actually unknown. Of what value our culture, our elegant houses, our fine spun clothing, our fastidious habits, if, in the refinement of a civilization that is veneered selfishness, we play our little plays like children and never wake to the power of usefulness as grown up men and women, who have giants' work to do for the weak and less fortunate?"

Luella Marsh listened in genuine surprise. This was another new phase of her lover's character. But there were things said by him that angered her, although while John Gordon was talking she was saying to herself, "I did not know he had any gifts as a speaker. That would bear developing."

Looking up at him, noting the flush of feeling on his generally pale face, she spoke the first impulsive thought roused by what he said.

"Do you really classify lives like yours and mine as useless? Are the people then, the only useful beings? Or is it true that the people, as you have defined them, are such a needy and suffering quantity as you say? Are they not as selfish in their way as we are in ours?"

He heard her in surprise. It was quickly becoming more clear to each of them that they had much to learn of each other's personality. Still, he was resolved not to argue matters. He had come with one clear simple purpose in mind. He did not wish to have it obscured or put

into second place. If Luella Marsh would go with him into the life he had chosen he knew enough of her to feel certain that both their lives would be strengthened and beautified; that if she once cast in her lot with him she would never look back, but would go on clear to the end, and bear all things with growing joy and peace. If she decided to reject him and his career, because of details in it that were unknown or painful, then he had no calm answer to his own heart as to the result on himself except to say his path would be a lonely one. But he was of determination not to leave the matter unsettled. They were not children, but grown man and woman and should be able to know their own minds.

"Luella, I did not come to argue with you," he spoke with great gentleness in reply to her questions. "I want you. I love you. That means I would not hide one particle of the truth from you. If you marry me it will be a life of burden bearing, it will be a future full of pain in many ways, it will mean very largely a total breaking away from all the soft, easy, pleasant social relations we have both known since we were born. All this is true. I would not try to soften it for you. But it will be a joyful life, a life of satisfaction. A life full of the consciousness of helping to make a better world, of doing something besides play, Luella!" He forgot in his feeling what he had said ever since he knew her, that she could not be moved by pleading, and rising suddenly he went over and kneeled beside her. "Luella! Tell me this simply. Do you love me enough to share the unknown future with me? Will you not come with me, trusting in our love

for each other to bear us over hard places and explain new experiences as fast as they become real to us?"

She trembled and hesitated. She had but to reach out her hand and put it in John Gordon's and say one word. She did not move nor speak for almost a minute. Then she said, looking straight in front of her,

"Must I give an answer now?"

"Luella! You have already given me answer! You have promised to be my wife!" The words were spoken by him in a moment of great longing as he saw her indecision and foresaw her inevitable answer.

Her eyes darkened a little.

"I never promised to be the wife of—"

"The wife of—" John Gordon repeated after a silence so long that its suspense was not bearable to him.

"I hardly know how to finish—" she uttered a short laugh and John Gordon rose at once to his feet—"I can never live in Hope House," she added in a low tone.

"Is that your answer, then?" He stood looking at her calmly but she did not look up.

"Yes," she finally replied.

"Then we must go our separate ways, so help us God!" he exclaimed in a sudden burst of passion, for his heart was hot within him.

He paused a moment irresolutely and then started to go out. She had not made any motion nor lifted her head to look at him. At the door he turned for an instant, and saw to his astonishment, that her proud head lay on her arms, which were outstretched on the table near which she had been sitting.

He was back by her side, kneeling again and calling her name. When she lifted her head there were tears on her glowing cheeks.

"John! I cannot bear to have it so."

"Then do you love me, Luella, enough to share all with me?" he cried.

"Yes, I love you, John," she said slowly. But even as she said it she drew back from him a little. "At the same time I do not see why it is necessary to live at Hope House."

"Not necessarily there, but somewhere among the people. Luella, do you not understand my reasons for wanting to know the people?"

"I am not sure," she replied in a troubled tone, and then suddenly she turned away from him and put her head down on her arms again.

John Gordon rose and walked up and down the room. Twice as he went past the table he paused irresolutely, his mind in a turmoil, his heart uncertain. The third time he stopped, with decision in his manner and placed his hand on her head.

"I do not ask you to marry me unless you can trust everything to me. If you are not able to say, without any fear or doubt, 'I will go with you in all the way you have chosen,' I do not, I cannot plead with you, Luella. Is that asking too much, dear? Can the man who loves you ask any less?"

"No, no, he can ask no less! But John, I fear to go—" she had raised her head and was looking at him with more agitation than he had ever known her to show. "I am not

certain that I am fitted, that I am adapted, for such a life. I have a horror of the places—the—I do not love the people, John, as you say you do. Am I to blame for that?"

She asked the question almost timidly, but nothing could soften the hardness of the statement to him. He did not yet see that the one thing that kept her from coming to him without any question was her lack of religious experience. She did not love the people because all her life had been so far devoted to a love of the things that had surrounded her social position.

"No, I do not think you are to blame. But oh, Luella, could you not learn to love them? Could you not come with me and let the future—"

"I could not pretend," she began with a return of her proud attitude.

"I do not ask you to pretend. If you love me, will not all the rest be possible?"

She was silent a moment. Then suddenly she looked up and said frankly,

"I would not be true to you, if I kept anything back. I not only do not love the people as you do, but I do not see why you should sacrifice your life to them as you plan to do. I cannot see that you will accomplish anything."

"And is accomplishment the great and only thing? Is there nothing in being, or in striving, regardless of accomplishment? But I cannot argue the matter. If you love me enough, Luella, all the rest will follow. If you don't, it will all be useless to you."

She still looked at him with the uncertain, disturbed air, that had marked her manner when he first began to

talk to her. Only the look had deepened into an expression of doubt and painful unrest.

"I do not see the need of all you plan to do. I do not see the need," she said slowly.

"You would not have to see that, if you only loved me," he replied in a low tone and there was a hopelessness in it that had not been present before. He stood looking at her and suddenly he added,

"Let us be entirely frank, Luella, that we may not misunderstand. You shrink from the thought of living in a place like Hope House, you hesitate to commit your future to me because of the physical losses, the absence in our future of these physical luxuries we have both known, into which we have been born—is that it—your love for me is not strong enough to make this loss seem insignificant—is that true?"

It was a blunt question and he purposely put it bluntly. Perhaps more so than was fair to her. Over her face the color deepened and she evidently felt the implied reproach in his summing up of her hesitation.

"That is not quite the truth."

"A part of it?"

"You have no right to force such a question upon me."

"I have a right to know the whole truth."

"You would not understand—"

"I would understand everything, if you loved me enough to go with me without question."

"Love does not mean being unreasonable."

"Yes, Luella, it does, at least this far,—that love will trust where it cannot always give reasons."

She was silent again.

He took a step nearer.

"Luella, one question only. If I decide that I must go to live in Hope House would you go with me? Or would you refuse on account of the physical and social loss?"

She looked at him steadily at first, although her color deepened and her lips trembled.

"You have no right to ask such a question."

"I have; the right of a man who loves you."

"Then I say I would not go, not for the reason you think but—"

"It is not necessary to explain," John Gordon answered sadly. "Luella, it is plain to me that you do not love me."

"You have no right to make any such test!" she exclaimed passionately.

She stood up and faced him proudly, and he simply looked into her eyes a moment and then turned and walked out of the room. This time he did not look back. As he closed the door, Luella Marsh fell upon her knees by the side of the table, exclaiming,

"God pity me! God have mercy!"

John Gordon went out of the house calmly enough although his heart was torn with passionate conflict. As the current of the city swept him on, there surged up in his soul hot anger that he had ever loved this woman who could not have the test of faith in the man who loved her. But it was at this crisis that his real religious experience rescued him from wreck. Had it not been for that this story had never been told. But as he went his way that

day his anger fell, and in its place there grew up a tender memory that left no room for harsh judgment.

But for the present he was overwhelmed by the result. He had put Luella Marsh into the altar place of a proud man's affection. Every day since the time she had pledged her heart to his he had thanked God for what had been given him. Her apparent response to his ambitions, especially noticeable in her correspondence during his absence, had exhilarated him. To find now that she would not trust her life to him because he had chosen a career of hardship and loss of physical things, struck him the severest blow he had ever experienced. The failure on the part of his father and sister to understand or sympathize became insignificant compared with this event. As he walked along he began to torture himself with questions. Had he made a mistake in taking her answer as final? Had he, as she said, no right to make such a test? Was it asking too much of any woman to ask her to leave a home of luxury to which she had been accustomed from birth, and go at once into surroundings that were repulsive to her? And then, she had confessed that she did not love the people as he did but—was that an unpardonable sin? Yet he had felt when she said it, as if an impassable gulf had suddenly been dug between them. Had he acted as a man should act who has so much at stake as in this case?

The torture of these questions was so keen that after walking several blocks he turned to go back.

"I must see her again," he kept saying. "I cannot let it end here."

He went up the steps and rung the bell.

The servant who came to the door eyed him curiously.

"Miss Marsh has gone out," she said, and John Gordon at first did not believe her, until he remembered that the carriage was standing at the curb when he left Luella, and that she had said something about going out to the park before tea.

He slowly went down the steps and when he was on the sidewalk he paused.

Perhaps in all his life he had never felt so lonely as at that moment. The consciousness that his father and sister, and now the woman who had promised to be his wife, had repudiated his life, smote him with a sense of personal abandonment that was keen and searching.

For a moment he felt so completely alone that he let go of every motive for action. The city, and the overwhelming thought of its misery and sin and selfishness, enraged him. "Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die!" he cried out and nothing at that moment would have saved John Gordon, except the fact that what he had mentioned to his father and sister and Luella, as his religious experience, was the greatest fact so far in his career. As he stood still there at the foot of the steps, gradually his spirit grew calmer. The consciousness of God in his life grew stronger. The purpose of his ambition cleared. And after a little while he started on, knowing that his life work would not be changed, in its main intent, by anything that had so far happened. Only as he went on, he also knew that he could not and would not be the same man and do the same things, in some parts of his earthly vision, as if Luella Marsh had decided to walk with him in the way.

It was also quite clear to him that, without being able to give a good reason for it, he was not closing the chapter with Luella yet. He certainly entertained the idea of her still coming into his life. It was not from his interview with her that he drew any such hope. But he knew that he did not yet consider her action as final. Or possibly it was his own action that was not final.

He stopped at a corner, and the sight of a street name on a car going by decided his next movement.

"I'll go and take tea at Hope House," he said to himself, and took the car, noting by the time that he would reach the House just as the little family of residents were in the habit of sitting down to their evening meal.

Hope House stood in the midst of its desert of tenements, and its corner saloons and vaudeville halls, like an oasis of refuge and strength. Saloons to right and left, and front and rear, with piles of brick, and wood, and rubbish flung together in chaotic tumble heaps with openings for human beings, who streamed in and out of court, and alley, and doorway, or sat in pallid huddled masses on the steps or curbing, formed the frame in which Hope House was set, unique and alone.

John Gordon left the car one block from Hope House, and walked down past five saloons in the block, until he came to the arched entrance of the House. Going into the little court, he breathed a sigh of relief at the sight of the familiar oleander tubs that stood against the outer wall of the court, and marveled at their ability to blossom with such freshness in such surroundings.

"If oleanders ever had any fragrance in this part of

the city, they must almost smell of beer and sewer gas," he said to himself as he went on into the broad hall that opened on the court. He was by no means a stranger to Hope House. Since his return from abroad he had been a frequent visitor, and had been welcomed with that inner welcome that springs from well-known common purposes.

"You are just in time," called out a quiet, but cheerful voice, as John Gordon stepped into the doorway of the dining hall. "Miss Manning is absent. You may take her seat by me."

"I count myself fortunate," John Gordon replied, as he took the seat, returning the greetings of those at the table.

"We were talking about you," said the Head of the House with her quiet but earnest manner.

"I'm sorry to interrupt the conversation," replied John Gordon.

"No interruption, we assure you. We are glad you came in, for you are the only person who can answer a question Mr. Ford just asked."

"Rather a personal question, Mr. Gordon," said Ford, a student from the University, who was a resident of several month's standing. "The question I asked Miss Andrews was this; 'What is Mr. Gordon going to do? Will he possibly come in here with us?'"

John Gordon did not answer the question at once. He knew the complete freedom of the social atmosphere of Hope House, especially at meal times, and understood well that his silence would not be misconstrued as discourtesy.

He looked around the circle of earnest friendly faces at the table and his gaze included as it had many times before,

the room itself with its high dark wainscoting, its few but choice portraits, its plain but attractive homelikeness. But as on every other occasion, his look finally came back to the face of the Head of the House. For she was the genius of the Place.

Grace Andrews was in her thirty-sixth year. At the time John Gordon first met her at Hope House, she had been in charge of the settlement for twelve years. Twelve years of association with desperate human problems, such as those that swarmed like the people themselves, had left on her face marks of that human, divine calmness that all great women bear who have loved the people. If Grace Andrews did not impress strangers or visitors as being great in any real sense, it was because the look of her face spoke of a quiet peace that so many people superficially associate with meekness, but do not consider as an element of power. The residents of Hope House understood all that. And the oldest residents understood it better than the youngest, and had more unquestioned reverence for the greatness of Grace Andrews, than those who had less knowledge of her.

It was with a depressing consciousness of what this woman was, and of her wonderful life and influence, that John Gordon came into her presence. He had met her during his University career when some special studies had taken him down to Hope House. And one of the first places he had visited on his return from abroad had been the dining room with its fellowship life, presided over by that central figure that dominated the entire group. It was at that first meeting that he had frankly told her and the residents something of his religious experience and its bear-

ing on his life work. It was that frank confidence that had led up to the question by Ford.

"Well?" Miss Andrews finally said as John Gordon seemed to speak after looking at her so intently. During his silence the conversation at the table had gone on in a quiet but natural fashion. Everyone in Hope House always gave every one else perfect freedom of his personality. And no one felt at all disturbed when John Gordon did not reply at once to the student's query. They all paused in their talk when he spoke.

"I've been thinking of it. I would count it an honor to be a part of your family." He spoke to Miss Andrews, but included all the table with a gesture. "I'm still in some doubt concerning my future. I am sure you are enough interested in me to care to know that I have left my own home. I am just at present without a permanent place of abode. Perhaps you would be willing to take me in."

He spoke somewhat lightly, but not without a certain seriousness that they all seemed to understand. Miss Andrews glanced at him quickly, and said with a real tone of sympathy,

"We would not only give you a hearty welcome, Mr. Gordon, but count ourselves fortunate to have you with us."

"Thank you," he replied gratefully. "I would not come into the House, of course, except as one who would take the position of a learner. I have everything to learn and nothing to contribute. You would have to teach me the simplest duties of a resident, Miss Andrews. And I at least would be a very willing and obedient pupil."

"I have no doubt of that," she replied with a smile. "But the people who act that way are dangerously apt to be in a position to teach their teachers in time."

"I shall never be able to teach the teacher in Hope House," said John Gordon earnestly. Miss Andrews laughed and the faintest tinge of color appeared on her cheeks. "We are all learners here. Let him who has not learned something to-day, hold up his hand. Not a hand in sight. Oh, we are all in the primary class. The People are the Alphabet of God. And we have not yet learned the alphabet."

The talk gradually circled the table, while John Gordon continued to tell Miss Andrews something in detail of the interview with his father and sister. After the meal was over the residents scattered to their work, but half a dozen with Miss Andrews and John Gordon lingered a few minutes in the library and living room, which opened out of the wide hall, next the old fashioned staircase which went up near the center of the room. For Hope House had formerly been an old family mansion, and it stood now in its solitary refinement of interior, in complete contrast to every building in the dismal district, now ruled and ruined by the human ruins, that pleaded day and night for rebuilding, until the souls of the residents grew weary with the burden, and God either grew daily farther away, or closer by, in proportion as the workers in the settlement grew more and more to love the people, or more and more to lose faith in their redemption.

When John Gordon finally went away he had practically promised to become a permanent resident of Hope House.

Something of John Gordon's family history was known to most of the residents and there was enough of the romantic and unusual in such a decision as his, to stir the imagination of the earnest young men and women who had thrown in their lot with Hope House and what it stood for in the city.

When John Gordon came out from the archway and turned into the street it was after nine o'clock. He walked along for half a dozen blocks, trying to realize what his life work would be in such a place. Whatever else it would be, he knew it would be a life that would demand inexorably all the manhood possible. As he stopped and looked back down the street, and realized its wretchedness, its discomfort, its squalor, its moral filth, his heart cried out for strength, his soul felt compassion, and anger, and longing, and his love of the people to his intense satisfaction, grew in spite of what they were, and because of what they were.

He was still standing there, absorbed in his thought of future possibilities, when a man put his hand on his shoulder and said familiarly,

"John, do you want good company? I'm with you if you do!"

"David!" cried John Gordon in astonishment. "How do you happen to be here!"

"Studying life, eh?" said David Barton, as he put his arm within his friend's and walked on.

"But how does it happen that you—"

"Having a week's vacation. Harris told me I'd better go to Colorado. Been down here every night."

John Gordon walked on in deepening astonishment.

"Come up to the rooms and let us have a talk," said Barton and John Gordon quietly agreed. They took a car, and after riding two miles left the car, walked two blocks, and came out on Park Boulevard, where David Barton, managing editor of the Daily News, had apartments.

When they were seated David Barton turned a sharp, nervous, but kindly face towards John Gordon.

"Surprised to see me down in the region of Hope House? Great place, isn't it? Worth more than a trip to the Rockies to go through the show."

"Do you mean to say you have never been down around Hope House before?"

"I've been there several times, my son."

"Do you know Miss Andrews?"

"Knew her before you were out of High School."

"You never told me!"

"Why should I tell you everything at once?"

"Several years is not at once," replied John Gordon with a smile.

For answer, the older man gravely said after a pause.

"How old are you, John?"

"Thirty."

"And I'm forty. The pace is killing me. Harris says I may last five years more. I doubt it. He is evidently anxious to keep me going the five years. Do I look bad?"

He thrust his pale nervous face forward and John Gordon was almost shocked at his friend's manner. He was so much moved that he rose and went over and laid his hand on the other man's arm.

"David, you're not well. Why don't you take Harris's

advice and go out to Colorado, not for a week but for a year?"

"As bad as that?" David Barton said dryly. "I think I'm good for the five years. But tell me about yourself."

"I've left home. And I'm going to take up residence in Hope House."

"No! What! Live there!"

David Barton seemed to pay no attention to the fact of his friend's leaving home.

"I've been there to-night and made definite arrangements with Miss Andrews. I must go there in order to fit myself for my work."

"Your work?"

"Yes; for the people," replied John Gordon simply.

"Pooh! The people!"

David Barton sniffed contemptuously. "Who knows who the people are!" He stopped suddenly, and his whole manner changed. His sharp abrupt indifferent alertness was smothered out of his face like magic. He rose and walked through the room while John Gordon, who understood his moods quite well, listened in astonishment.

"John, listen to me. I believe I know something of your plans and ambitions. You're the only man I know who would do what you propose to do. I don't have much faith in it. At the same time I believe in you, John. I spoke contemptuously of the people. But in my heart, John, I love the people. I am one of them. To-night as I saw children rotting in those holes, I could have died for them. But the martyr's stuff is not in me to die for them, except by proxy. Let me tell you, John. You are going

at the thing back-handed. What do you want to go and live in Hope House for? Miss Andrews is doing splendid work, but even her efforts don't accomplish anything. Conditions are as bad there now as they were twelve years ago. It's good flesh and blood thrown to the lions, while the politicians and the gang look on and laugh at the human helplessness. Why, it is simply an outrage on civilization that a city like this lets a woman like Miss Andrews die by martyrdom in that infernal hell on earth, and never gives her the financial and social support she ought to have. And the hounds that own the tenements and saloons and vaudeville property, live in luxury, and pose as leaders in society, and allow conditions to be created that roll a stream of desperate human problems over Miss Andrews that will kill her in a few years. Yes, kill her!"

David Barton spoke with a savage energy that made John Gordon shudder. But when Barton had been silent a moment he continued in a calmer tone to make a proposition to John Gordon that John was totally unprepared for.

"Instead of going into Hope House why don't you come into the News? I can speak for Harris, that he will give you full swing on the Reform page of your own. You can have it all your own way. I'll help you with special stories and pictures that will make the property owners around Riverside street squirm. Harris is savage with the mayor, because of last year's campaign. He'll be glad to get even with the administration by showing up the rotten concern. I tell you, John, there's an earthquake going to rattle the city hall this winter, and Harris and the News will be one

name for the earthquake. The old man is just in the mood for pushing the Reform business in the name of the people. He will agree to anything I say. The press is the only real power left in the city anyhow. Think of what you can do for the people with the News back of you. We can make a special business of the slum holes and make it mighty interesting for some of the old money bags of this God-forsaken metropolis. Don't answer at once. At any rate give me time to cough."

David Barton sat down close by John Gordon and had a coughing spell that lasted a few minutes. John Gordon silently watched him, steadily excited by the offer just made to him. Could he accept it? Was it not one of those opportunities that men have come to them but once? What might he not do for the people if a whole page of a great powerful, practically boundless, wealthy daily paper were at his disposal! The material he could put before the public! The conditions he could expose! The wrongs he could right! The lives he might save! The possibilities grew larger every moment he thought of it.

David Barton finally ceased coughing and spoke again.

"Well, will you come into the News? What do you say?"

But John Gordon did not answer at once. Suddenly he had thought of Luella Marsh. If she would not marry him as a resident of Hope House, would she not be proud to be the wife of a writer on one of the most powerful dailies of the world? And the same object would be gained for the people. But how about his declaration that he must know the people by direct knowledge, gained by living

among them? Yet, could he not do that in some way, and still put this modern lever of the press under the problem?

He faced his friend with strong feeling. The day had been full of events for him, but this closing one affected him in some way deeper than all the rest.

CHAPTER III.



T last John Gordon spoke slowly.

"David, do you know how much you have tempted me?"

"For your good!"

"I'm not so sure. The offer is full of possibilities. Still—"

"Well, don't keep anything back."

"The News itself—you know my ideas about it. The paper is full of sensation, it is unreliable, it is not journalism that any thoughtful man respects."

"What difference does that make if you have your own page to do with it as you like?"

Barton spoke with apparent indifference concerning his friend's estimate of journalism, as if he either acknowledged the truth of Gordon's statement, or did not care to argue it.

"Of course it makes a good deal of difference. Do you think Harris is sincere in his reform movements? Is he using the paper to help the people, or is he simply taking up popular causes, because he is shrewd enough to see that it is good policy for the News?"

Barton looked at John Gordon quizzically.

"Do you know Harris?"

"I've met him, of course, as you know. But I don't know him."

"Neither do I. He's put two million dollars into the News and the paper has made him at least half that, in the time it's been going. He's proud as Lucifer and has Lucifer's ambition. He's willing to do anything, except to get into jail for the paper. And he'd probably do that, if it would increase the circulation. But what difference does it make to you, John, so long as you have full swing in your own department?"

"I don't know that my work will really be helped by going into print. To tell the honest truth, I have no faith in Harris, and I have a contempt for his journalistic methods. Now look here—"

John Gordon picked up from the table a copy of the News and began reading some of the head lines.

"Microbes in Car Straps!"

"Menace to Traveling Public! Danger explained by Professor Roitger of the University."

"The Richest Woman in the World! Her Daily Routine. Over \$500,000 worth of gems in her hair at the Court Ball."

"The cost of one day's spree for two Fourteenth street bloods! Itemized account."

"Mrs. Brown calls Mrs. Jones a Liar. They have a scrappy time of it in the back yard. The neighbors take a hand!"

"Theological Set-To. At the University. Professors do not agree on figures. One Teaches that Adam never existed!"

"The Newest Fad. Society's Craze for Egyptian Mummies. The latest Developments!"

"The Tallest Woman in America. Her diet, daily habits, etc."

"Rottenness At The City Hall! A Full Expose of Doctor Lumme's extravagances. Policeman Murphy scores a hit at Alderman Schwartz. Turn on the Light."

"Thoroughbred toy dogs. An Expensive Luxury. Mrs. Near has a choice Collection."

"Ghastly suicide of an Old Sailor. Purposely jumped into Vat of boiling acid. Full particulars."

"War! The Sultan is growing more defiant. Orders out Bosphorus fleet!"

"The Sandal Craze. Boots and shoes a back number soon. Pictures of Latest Styles."

Gordon threw the paper down, and Barton laughed cynically.

"What's the matter with it? At any rate they keep buying it. Whoever sees an Index or a Standard around Hope House? There you are! If you want to reach the people, do it through the medium that the people use. Think of over three million readers of the News every day."

"Yes, think of it!" exclaimed John Gordon. "Think of the stuff they read that is untruth and exaggeration and hysteria about matters that are of no value. A column to 'Toy Dogs!' Kept by a rich woman who spends enough money on them to save the lives of a hundred babies. It is this sort of thing that makes anarchists and criminals. All Harris wants out of a reform page is to exhibit the paper. I'm almost sure of it."

"Probably!" said Barton dryly. "At the same time you

can be getting in your reform work, through a paper that is read by the very people you want to help."

"But it is not read nor believed in by the very people who have it in their power to help the People. David, the best people in the city don't care for the News. They laugh at its editorials, and don't care for its influence. It really has no influence with them."

For the first time David Barton seemed disturbed. The frank criticism of his friend concerning the News, in respect to its printed matter had not moved him. But this last statement touched a tender spot. Barton's pale cheeks flushed, and he struck the table with his clenched fist.

"Better not tell Harris that! He has an idea that his paper runs the town. He thinks his editorials make public sentiment."

"He's wrong!" John Gordon spoke decidedly. "His editorials have no such power. They are rated along with the rest of the paper. The fact is, yellow journalism works out its own destruction inevitably. Its days are already numbered."

"The News is gaining in circulation every day."

"All the bigger fall when it comes," replied Gordon briefly, and then they were both startled by a voice from the doorway of the room adjoining.

"Beg pardon, Barton. I couldn't make you hear, though I knocked twice."

Barton turned his head as a man came into the room, and exclaimed, "Mr. Harris!" at the same time sending a questioning flash to Gordon—"Wonder how much he heard?"

Harris walked up to the table and coolly helped himself

to a cigar from a little Chinese pot and lighted it at the cigar jet.

"Mr. John Gordon, Mr. Harris," said Barton, who had fully recovered his usual indifferent attitude by this time.

"Glad to meet you, Mr. Gordon," said Harris putting out a very long white hand. John Gordon took it, although instantly he felt a most intense dislike for the man.

He was of a thin, wiry physique, smooth-faced, a bloodless complexion, straight lips, and cold grey eyes. His manner was perfectly self-possessed, and neither Gordon nor Barton could detect any sign in his face that he had overheard a syllable of their talk before he entered. He was faultlessly dressed, and had the general appearance of a man who has exhausted a large part of his interest in life, on account of a large number of intense experiences. At the same time there was a serious alertness about him that was very noticeable. He was not blase in the ordinary use of that word. He evidently had boundless faith in himself. John Gordon had no difficulty in telling why the man produced such a dislike in him. It was because of his absolute egotism.

"Mr. Gordon is my friend, the one I mentioned to you the other day as a possible contributor in a new department," Barton said, as Harris still remained standing near the table.

Harris looked at Gordon and said carelessly—

"I understand you are going to experiment down in the slums around Bowen street."

"I may live there. I don't know about experimenting," replied John Gordon coldly. He was rapidly begin-

ning to have Miss Andrews' dislike of the word "slums" as he had already grown to have a hatred of the idea of "experimenting" with the people.

Harris walked over to a chair at the other end of the table, and after a silence which neither Barton nor Gordon seemed inclined to break, he said, leaning a little forward and speaking with careful emphasis,

"Mr. Gordon, I am prepared to make you a proposition that I hope you will at least thoughtfully consider. The News now has a circulation of 700,000 copies a day. That means that practically three million people read it. At least half the population of the city read my paper. It is especially true of the working men, the poor, and the people of the street and the shop. The boulevard may not take the News. Granted."

(Gordon looking at the newspaper owner thought he could detect just a shadow of resentment under the apparent indifference.) "But the slum takes it and reads. I'd rather have the slum for reader any time. The boulevard does not make anything but itself, but the slum makes conditions. Now then, this is my proposition. I will give you the entire control of a page of the News to write up the conditions of the city where you expect to live or work. May I ask where? Mr. Barton has not informed me."

"I expect to live as a resident in Hope House."

"Good!" Harris exclaimed with an eagerness that was unmistakable. "You couldn't do better. Miss Andrews of course has made her work known everywhere. She has been an occasional contributor to the News. You couldn't strike out on a more popular appeal than from that place

as a center. See here! Let me block out a program for a page that will set this city to thinking as it never thought before."

He at once outlined a series of subjects for a Reform Page from the Social Settlement view point, which was simply marvelous in its understanding of the conditions and the needs. Barton, with a born newspaper man's instinct, grasped the details with rapidity and showed his interest by an occasional interjection or hint that at once led off into farther possibilities. Even Gordon with his growing feeling of repulsion for the man, which increased every minute, could not resist an admiration for his great shrewdness and insight. And all the time he was blocking out the page, Gordon thrilled at the vision opened up of what might be done for the people and by them, if once a daily that was really theirs lived its life for theirs.

"Of course I understand," Harris had at last added, "that all this will mean a tremendous amount of work. That is what a daily paper means to everybody connected with it. But it need not mean that you would have to give up residence in Hope House. In fact it would be better to continue your actual touch with the district, so as to be able to give what you write for the paper, color. I also realize that you have need of money to carry out some of these plans. That is the reason I stand prepared to make this offer. If you will undertake this work, I will pay you five hundred dollars a month, and in addition help carry out some of these ideas where money is needed. I don't care to say just how much I'll give. Time enough for that when we get to it."

He stopped abruptly, and then to the surprise of the two friends he suddenly rose and said, as he came up to the table and took his hat, which he had laid down there—

“Don’t answer now. Give it consideration. Whatever you choose to arrange with Barton will be satisfactory. Barton, you’d better get out to Colorado for a month as I advised. Knowles can manage very well for a while longer. Good night.”

He walked out and Barton and Gordon sat silent for a moment.

“Of course he heard what you said about the paper having no influence with the best people,” said Barton with a chuckle.

“I believe he did, but his manner did not betray it except once.”

“Yes, I noticed that. Oh, the old man would give his long white hand to possess real influence. That’s his ambition, my boy. All he said about the boulevard and the slum was pure nonsense. He doesn’t believe it any more than I do.”

“I believe it though. He spoke the truth whether he meant to or not.”

“What difference?” David Barton spoke carelessly. “But this proposition, John,” he added, keenly watching Gordon. “How about that, eh? The opening, the leverage, the money. Wait a minute. This confounded cough is going to get me again.”

He went into the other room this time, and his coughing spell lasted so long that Gordon was alarmed. He went in where his friend was sitting with his head down between

his knees, his whole body racked with the effort, and when it was over he still maintained the same position until Gordon remonstrated with him.

"David, you're in no condition to go on with work. You're killing yourself on the News. I had no idea you had such a cough. How long have you been this way?"

"The average limit of usefulness on the News," said David Barton, as he lifted up his head, "is less than ten years from the time of beginning. I've been with it now going on six. The rule in a daily paper is, no old men in any department. If you see an old man any where around the office he's a visitor or stranger. Modern journalism is a man killer. I'm just one of the fools caught between the rollers. See? It's like this. Harris prizes me because I know how. But when I once let go, he knows he can get another fool to take my place. Food for the lion. Three cheers for the press! It's the great agency of civilization. It's the prize life taker. It's the—Look out! Here I go again!"

He put his head down and coughed so long and violently that at the end of it John Gordon found himself on his knees by the side of his friend, holding his head and now thoroughly alarmed.

"Why, this can't go on, David," he expostulated.

"Yes, it can apparently. At least it seems to go on quite easily!"

"But you'll simply commit suicide if you don't listen to reason, and quit all work for at least six months."

"Can't do it. Got too much at stake," Barton answered. He rose and going into an adjoining room he took some

medicine, bathed his face, and came out looking so much better that John Gordon was amazed.

"Only a trifling little cough, John. It's not on my lungs. Just a throat trouble. I got caught out in the rain down near Hope House the other night and didn't have a chance to steal an umbrella without getting caught again. Come in and let's have out the Reform business. You can't let Harris's offer go by. It's too much of a chance."

"But I'm keeping you up too late," Gordon said doubtfully.

"Why, old man, haven't you sent your things over here to stay until you get married or something? Whose are those duds out in the hall?"

"They're mine I expect; I sent them over this afternoon. The break had to come at home sometime, and I knew you would take me in, at any time."

"Sit down, then," said Barton giving his friend a push into an easy chair. He himself went over to a lounge and lay down on it, turning his pale thin face with its great glowing eyes towards John Gordon.

The grim death had already laid a long hand on Barton's chest, but with the stubborn cynicism of his character, Barton refused to acknowledge any mastery, although contrary to most victims of consumption he knew and acknowledged himself, that, do what he would, he could not shake that hand off.

John Gordon mournfully eyed the recumbent figure on the lounge.

"Forgive me, David, I have been so busy over my own

plans that I have not thought of you. Why have you not let me know about—”

“O let’s talk of your matters. Mine can wait. Besides, don’t you know it’s not the thing to talk to sick people about their condition? Don’t make me believe that I have anything. How about Harris’s offer?”

“I have decided not to accept it,” replied John Gordon quietly.

“That’s plump. Say why.”

John Gordon did not answer at once.

“I’ve already told you partly. Seeing Harris confirms my opinion concerning his insincerity. He simply wants to use the fact of my connection with Hope House to get a feature more or less sensational for the News.”

“You didn’t take to him very lovingly, did you?” Barton chuckled.

“I found myself in danger of hating him.”

“Still, Harris has his good points. He’s the most egotistic man I ever knew, but with the exception of that, and perhaps a dozen other remarkable faults he’s interesting. He’s interesting—” Barton repeated. “You’re too particular, John. I don’t see why you can’t carry on the department and make things around Bowen street just hum for reform if you have the paper to help you. If you expect an angel to come along and give you a page of his daily to boost your reforms, you’ll have to wait till angels are thicker in the newspaper business than they are now. I don’t know any myself. My acquaintance so far has been in the other direction.”

“There’s a reason I haven’t given for refusing Harris.”

John Gordon spoke thoughtfully. "I want to know the people before I begin to talk or write about them. And I ought to spend at least ten years of my life in seeing, hearing, thinking, knowing, but not much in writing, not yet. Do you know what the Bishop of London said awhile ago?"

"No, I don't know the Bishop."

"He said, 'I have found that isolation of one class from another is the root of all social evils. Contact with the neglected people and the lapsed masses was the method of Christ's reclamation of the lost. It is the only method that can succeed now.' Isn't that quite remarkable for a Bishop? I met him in London. He is the most all around Christian I ever saw. I wish they had a Bishop like that here. Now you see I don't want to go into the newspaper business, in the sensational way that Harris wants. I need to live among the people for a period, at least until I am able to talk and write with some sort of knowledge. Harris' idea is to burst out with a page of denunciation, and hysterical, pictorial exposure of human conditions, partly for political reasons, but more especially to get the News before the public and do a big advertising business."

"You wrong Harris even at his worst," said Barton decidedly. "I can't help thinking he's got some human kindness in him. He may be all egotism but he's not all bad. There's the money offer. You haven't considered that."

John Gordon seemed troubled for a moment.

"Of course we shall need money for all the things we plan. Miss Andrews was wishing she might secure five thousand dollars for the new dormitory. She goes out and lectures every winter to make expenses."

"Yes! The city will kill her! It will kill her, I tell you!" cried out Barton in a genuine burst of rage.

"The world kills all its prophets and reformers in one way or another," said John Gordon sadly. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. The very people that applaud Miss Andrews and say she is doing a grand work don't come to her rescue in any great numbers. And she is in sore need right now."

"Then why don't you let Harris help?"

"He can help if he wants to. If he's sincere he will do it without my going on the paper. I've made up my mind," Gordon hastily added as Barton made a gesture. "I think I can secure some money from men in the city."

"Let me know how much, so we can publish the amount, will you?" Barton said dryly.

John Gordon did not answer, and after quite a long silence Barton said suddenly.

"By the way, I suppose Miss Marsh will help you, of course. You'll be married and set up residence together in Hope House. How did you win her over to your extreme views?"

"I haven't. We are not going to be married. She refuses to go with me into Hope House. Oh David! Do you think that was a mistake?"

It all poured out at once, because all the evening John Gordon had been longing to confide in the one man in all the city whom he loved and trusted. Everything they had been talking about so far had seemed, in one sense, of small importance compared with his heart's hunger for her, which had deepened with every moment's absence from her. His

immediate resolve to go to Hope House, his talk with Miss Andrews, his visit with his friend, the incident of Harris and his offer, were not evidence of his insensibility to that resolve on her part to refuse his choice of life work; it was only characteristic of him to go straight on with the details of his life no matter what occurred. John Gordon was the last man in the world to withdraw into a sullen or moody isolation on account of great private trouble or sorrow.

But he longed for sympathetic counsel. And his impulsive outcry simply voiced another fact of his nature—the fact of his affectionate trust in friendship, a trust that kept no event secret that a friend might wish to know and share.

David Barton sat up and exclaimed sharply.

“Do you mean to say that Miss Marsh refuses to live with you in Hope House?”

“She does refuse. But I did not give her time, I am afraid, to give her reasons.”

“Time for reasons! How much time does she want?” Barton went on savagely. “Hope House is not good enough for her, eh? She is not willing to go with the man who loves her, into such a burden bearing life! She loves her nice, clean, soft, easy social position more than she loves the man! No, I tell you,” Barton silenced his friend, who made a gesture of dissent. “The girls of this age are not like those of our fathers.’ They are not willing to begin in a small economical way and share their husband’s privations. They want big expensive establishments right off. They have no idea of any sort of a life except one

of luxury and social successes. To my mind John, you're well rid of her!"

"No, no, David! Not that! I ought not to have made such a test. You do not know her as I do."

"I don't want to, either. Isn't it 'for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer?' If I were the woman you loved, wouldn't I go with you anywhere, John? You know I would; mean, selfish animal that I am, if I were a woman and had the love of John Gordon I wouldn't even ask him where he was going, I would simply go. That's the reason I say you're well rid of her. She's not worthy of you, John."

"But you have never loved anyone, David!" cried John Gordon in great distress, for he was nearer saying a sharp word to his friend than at any time since their friendship began.

"I love you, John, more than this selfish woman ever loved. But I am afraid that's not saying very much. Wouldn't I die for you?"

"I believe you would, David."

"Well, this woman wouldn't even live for you."

"It's harder to live than to die sometimes." John Gordon answered with a sigh.

"I tell you she's not worthy of you, John. 'Mend your broken heart or get another.'" Barton sang the first line of a popular music hall ballad. "No woman is worthy of a man if she refuses to accept his terms, when they are as reasonable and as necessary as yours. But it has hit you hard, hasn't it?"

For answer John Gordon laid his head down on the ta-

ble. Barton eyed him sympathetically but offered no word of consolation. After a while he muttered,

"Confound these women! They make more trouble than all the men put together. The young fellow seems to have sustained a compound fracture. But it'll heal in time. Good thing he's got a steady job. Hope House will give him employment." He lay quiet and after a little, Gordon rose and walked into the other room.

He stayed there until he heard Barton begin to cough again, when he instantly returned to his friend's side, to find him sitting up on the couch, his head between his hands.

This time the coughing was of short duration, and Barton exclaimed, the instant he was able to speak,

"I can tell time by my cough, it's so regular. I shall miss it when it leaves. The last one to-night. I usually wind it up about half past ten."

"David, have you consulted a doctor?"

"Not to-day."

"Any time?"

"Certainly."

"What does he say?"

"Just what you and Harris say. Quit work and go to Colorado. I can't. Don't bother about it. I won't go, that's all. I've begun to get attached to the cough, it has shown such an affection for me."

He straightened up, and laughed at the look in his friend's face. Gordon was only partly assured.

"It will kill you."

"First time anything ever did."

"You have no right to neglect it."

"Neglect it? Don't I nurse it day and night? No cough ever had better care than mine. I give it the best the patent medicine show affords."

"It will be the death of you."

"All right," Barton said cheerfully. "Rather die from my cough than from a stupid thoughtless trolley car. By the way, John, did you ever think of the difference between being run over by a horse and wagon, and an automobile?"

"I never gave it much thought."

"More people get run over by automobiles than by horses, so the facts show. You see a man can dodge a horse because he,—the horse—is alive. But an automobile—. Let's change the subject. Give me your program."

"My program."

"Your program as a reformer. What are you going to do? What lies in your mind? John—" David Barton swiftly changed from the careless, flippant manner he had assumed over his physical condition, and John Gordon instantly knew the friend who loved him was talking now out of his great serious heart. "John, if you are really going to try to make the old world better you've held out your arm to a wrestler, who will give you the struggle of your life. I want to help. I don't believe it will amount to anything. The struggle I mean. And maybe not the help either. But tell me your heart's desire."

"Well then," John Gordon answered, while his whole expression glowed with his real deep religious enthusiasm and a pride that swept his thought, even of Luella Marsh, out of existence. "I have a program. First, I plan to live

at Hope House as long as I can be of use there, or as long as I can, from that place in the city learn the city. It may be five years, it may be ten. If it is ten I shall be only forty. A man cannot do much public work worthy of the name until he is forty."

"History and biography say otherwise, but never mind," muttered Barton. "Go on."

"My plans of course do not cover possibilities that may come into my experience, at the end of my residence in Hope House. But I have dreamed of many things. The first thing I need is more knowledge of the people. I don't mean book knowledge, but live, personal knowledge of people. Not the kind that makes a man a professor of Sociology in the University, but the kind that makes a man want to change bad laws, or make good ones, the kind of knowledge of people that Paul had, when he said 'Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.' The kind of knowledge of people that compels a man to see in every other man a universe of eternal value and eternal happiness."

"There are mighty few people in this city that think of run-down-at-the-heel humanity after that fashion," muttered Barton again. Then after a silence he asked,

"Who's against you in all this?"

"Selfish greed, ecclesiastical pride in the churches; political rottenness in the city management, cynical indifference on the part of cultured men and women; whisky; yellow-press; business interests wherever they touch financial loss, if reform calls for sacrifice; foreign-born and foreign-shaped classes. But most of all, the opposition of high bred apathy which grows out of the soil of irreligion."

"And who is on your side?" Barton asked almost mechanically, in a low tone.

"God; all good men and women in the churches and there are many; a rising sentiment among young men against municipal partisanship; a gradually rising journalism which in time will demand the extinction of yellow journalism, which is an excrescence that carries in large measure its own destruction, and a rising tide of popular passion against the saloon as an institution and for more equal opportunities in the field of struggle for human happiness."

"You left out the largest item in the list of forces against reform."

"What's that?"

"The people themselves."

"Of course I realize that," John Gordon replied slowly. "But it was not the people that crucified Jesus. It was the Scribes and Pharisees."

"The people yelled, 'Crucify him!'"

"The rabble, you mean."

"What's the difference?"

"I don't know exactly; but the rabble is not the people."

"Mighty fine distinction." Barton muttered again. "Of course you can't deny that the common people are an ungrateful lot. You heal ten lepers and only one out of the ten will ever thank you for it."

"What difference does that make to me if they're healed?"

"Heap of difference to them, though. I suppose you know that even the politicians don't get in Miss Andrews' way so much as the people themselves. They don't know enough to make the general good of greater concern than

their particular good. They're an ungrateful lot, the people are."

"Not all of them. But even if they were, I don't know as that is any reason for letting them alone. Jesus probably knew that only one of the ten lepers would return to give thanks, yet he healed them all."

"They must be mighty ashamed of themselves by this time," said Barton wearily. Gordon instantly noted it.

"You're tired out. Not another word to-night. Can't I do anything for you? No? You will call me if you need me?"

"Yes, of course. You know where your old room is. Just make yourself at home. I gave orders to William when your things came to get your room ready. Sound sleep to you."

In the morning the friends breakfasted at a club room near by, where Barton had bachelor quarters at table, and John Gordon noted with concern the face of Barton, which showed marks of wakefulness.

"I coughed once or twice just to keep in practice. And at six o'clock I went off again just as a reminder of getting up time. But don't you worry. I'll be all right when I get used to it."

He laughed lightly, and accompanied Gordon part way down into the city, leaving him at the point where the Hope House district began, after exacting a promise from him that he would take dinner with him at seven that evening.

John Gordon went at once to Hope House and had a conference with Miss Andrews.

"There is no reason why I should not begin my work at once," Gordon said.

"The trouble is," Miss Andrews spoke with a slight smile, "You are not like the average resident. More than half of my people during the last ten years have left me to enter their life work. Now I understand—"

"This is my life work," said Gordon gravely.

"It is a matter of both life and death, Mr. Gordon. But let us arrange a definite program," she added hastily, as if disturbed by some idea foreign to this conference. "How would you like a tenement house tour to begin with?"

"I will do whatever you suggest. I am sure that whatever it is, it will be just the right thing to do."

"Here is obedience for you! Will you always be as tractable?"

"I hope so"

"Very well." She hesitated a moment. "Suppose you go out with Ford. He is making a report of the block west of Bowen street. You can help him."

For a week John Gordon and Ford, the University student, made a special study of a block of tenements in the Hope House district. Ford took kodak pictures of alleys, and back yards, and stairways, and groups of tenement children, and inanimate groups of garbage, and stifling, narrow courts, and displays of soiled and tattered wash, and everything else, except the smells, as Gordon said, and he and Ford took them without the aid of a camera. Gordon tabulated statistics, birth and death rate, density, nationality, disease, occupation, religion and absence of it, number of people in single rooms, quality of food used, drink and drunkenness, saloons in block, and their revenue, together with

all other items that bore on the life of the lives in that ulcer of the city.

At the end of the week Gordon had reached some conclusions.

"What can be done about bettering conditions? The people in the tenements are victims, to a large degree, of conditions that they are unable to better. The owners of the property! There's the vital point. How to reach them?"

For answer Miss Andrews took down from the House Library a volume containing a list of property owners in Hope House neighborhood. Before giving it to Gordon she said sadly, "You must not let this list disturb your general purpose. Of course it will not do that. But I am sure you want all the facts."

"That is just what I want," said Gordon wondering a little at Miss Andrews' gravity, although she was always calmly serious.

She quietly, but with the same manner of doubtful hesitation, put the book in his hands and went into the hall to answer a summons.

John Gordon opened the volume and began to run down the names in the list. He was alone at the time and in thinking back over his experience he was able to recall the strange sensation he had of isolation from every friend, even Barton, whom he had not seen for several days. This feeling of isolation was so unusually strong that he had to fight against the falsehood, that there was no tie of friendship in his work, that he stood alone in the struggle for humanity.

Name after name of agents, or firms, or companies having control of the property around Hope House had been

read by him, and he had not reached the block he had been studying, for his interest deepened every moment, as he recognized familiar names, familiar in the commercial and social world.

He turned over a page and came to the section marked "Waterside." And the second name he read was Rufus Gordon, with numbers indicating ownership of several of the worst houses in the block. He read the name with heightening color, and went on and near the top of the opposite page he saw the name of Philo H. Marsh, and numbers crediting him with owning half a dozen tenements. Glancing at the bottom of the page, Gordon noted the same name again, as owner of property that by reference to the map in the appendix, he identified by comparison with his own draft of the block as saloon and vaudeville property.

"Luella's father!" The idea that for years the woman to whom he had given his affections, had idled in the luxury of her home, kept in the possession of the soft, easy things of social luxury by means of money that had the taint of human misery and shame and sin on it, caused him a revolt against the whole cruel, social indifference of that part of the commercial world represented by the facts in the book before him.

"Luella's father and mine also!" he added. He leaned his head on his hand, and his face grew stern. Miss Andrews coming back to the library paused in the doorway and stood there a moment looking intently at him.

CHAPTER IV.



MISS Andrews had come into the room and up to the table before John Gordon raised his head.

"These names—"

"You found them. Of course I intended you should. I am sorry for you," Miss Andrews spoke sadly.

"Sorry for me! Sorry for them, Miss Andrews! I am not altogether surprised to find my father's name here, but Mr. Marsh—"

He was silent a moment.

"Mr. Marsh?" Miss Andrews asked, and John Gordon, who had been wondering if he could tell Miss Andrews anything about Luella, realized that she was in total ignorance of Luella and her father.

"Mr. Marsh is senior member of the firm of Marsh, Lyon and Humber, electricians. He is an old friend of my father. I have known him since I was a boy, and always respected him. It was a great surprise to me to find his name here."

"Why should it be?" Miss Andrews questioned calmly. "Business in many of its regular methods is not noted for a refined and loving expression of the Golden Rule. Most of the names in that list are names of men who fare sumptuously every day and are counted among the best citizens."

"I've made up my mind what to do," John Gordon said irrelevantly. "I am going to see my father and—"

"And what?"

"I won't promise until I have seen him. But you know better than I do, that the city ordinances are violated a dozen times in the Waterside Block. The overcrowding, the plumbing, the absence of lighting are all in direct violation of every ordinance on the subject. Scores of the tenants complained that their landlords refused to do anything."

Miss Andrews said nothing, but she eyed John Gordon with her customary calmness. It was the calmness of one who has been through the entire hell of political apathy and municipal incompetency and criminal neglect, and still preserves its equanimity.

"Let me know the result of your interview, please," she finally said as John Gordon lapsed into a silent brooding.

He went into the city next day and entered the bank of which Rufus Gordon was president, with a feeling that he strove to subdue, and a prayer that he might not be provoked into saying some things that burned in his heart. At the same time when he was once in his father's presence he began to doubt his ability to discuss the facts calmly.

Mr. Rufus Gordon showed no surprise at the sight of his son, although the two had not met since the eventful day when John Gordon had taken somewhat formal leave of his home.

"Will you take a seat?" Rufus Gordon spoke with the cold politeness he might have shown any man who had in all probability come to negotiate for a loan.

John Gordon remained standing, and came at once to the point of his errand.

"Father, we have decided each to go his own way, but that does not mean that we are never to have anything more to do with each other, does it?"

"When you are tired of your present foolishness you can come back." There was the faintest suggestion in Rufus Gordon's manner, of relenting in his tone and attitude. The lips trembled slightly and the eyes rested for just an instant on the son's face, before coming back to the apparently indifferent gaze that had been directed at the table.

"I have not come to talk of that, father. It is impossible for me to change my purpose. What I have come to see you about is this. You own, or control, some tenement property in Waterside block, Bowen Street, two blocks south of Hope House. Do you know from personal knowledge the condition of that property?"

Instantly over Rufus Gordon's face swept an angry wave of color.

"It is none of your business. This is a part of your contemptible meddling as a reformer in other people's affairs!"

"But it is my business! It is the business of every man. Father! Do you know the horrible condition of that property and the awful condition of the people living there?"

Rufus Gordon made no answer, but the anger was evidently deepening in him. John Gordon waited a moment. All his accumulated passion, growing out of what he had seen and heard during that one short week in Hope House, was in danger of rising like a torrent against his own father. But

when he spoke it was with a quiet earnestness that revealed his attempt at self mastery.

"Numbers 17 and 19 owned by you, father, contain 17 families. They are, as I suppose you know, front and rear tenements. They are both horribly out of repair and absolutely unfit for human habitation. Take the case of the plumbing. There are no revents to any of the pipes, and only one waste pipe has a trap. That is of no value because of the condition of the catch basins, which are below ground and have simply become so clogged with grease that they are cesspools that overflow the court and even overflow into the basement where two families are living. Back of number 19 on the alley is a stable in which a vegetable dealer keeps two horses and a cow. These are directly over a room which had been added to an old brick bakery which is in a terrible state of decay and threatens to fall down. If it does, as it is liable to do at any time, it will certainly result in the death or injury of the tenants. All the plumbing is in direct violation of a distinct city ordinance which makes it an offense to make piping without traps, revents, and catch basins to accumulate material that clogs the sewer connections. The overcrowding is simply indescribable. In both these tenements that you own and control, there is less than 200 square feet of floor area, for families of from five to seven, living in three and two rooms. There are six bedrooms in number 17 that are absolutely dark, and that in spite of the ordinance which provides that every room of a tenement or lodging house must have window space, equal to at least one-tenth of its floor area. These rooms not only do not have one-tenth window space, they do not have any at all,

they are simply dark rooms, the only light and air that ever enters them being what can get in through the door, which in many cases opens on a middle room, which in its turn has no light or air, except what can enter through a shaft between the front and rear tenements only six feet wide, and into which the tenants throw their garbage, because the boxes in front are broken and overflowing. Father, these human beings are rotting in these inhuman surroundings, and no language can convey the awful horror of child life, the cruel torture of mother life compelled to give birth to children, to nurse sick babies, to prepare meals, to endeavor to obtain sleep or rest, in the heart of overpowering odors, all in less space, and with less light and air, than a human being would grant to a suffering dumb animal. Father, the property owners of tenement buildings in this city are paying less attention to immortal creatures, made in God's image than they pay to sick cats, or imported toy dogs, or blooded race horses. And oh father, for the sake of all this tortured life, of these children born without play grounds, of these mothers who struggle to keep decent, and these girls who go down to ruin under the stress of the inhuman crowding, will you not do something? You can do it. The old buildings can be destroyed. They never can be repaired. They are simply alive with vermin and disease. But new buildings, covering the legal space on the lot, could be put up and be made to pay better than the old ones. You could save the lives of children for the future. You could—"

"Are you lecturing at me?" Rufus Gordon suddenly interrupted, his fat flabby face white with passion. "I know my own business, and I will attend to it!"

John Gordon took a step nearer and gazed with painful intentness into his father's face.

"Then do you mean to say, father, that you will not raise a finger to right these great wrongs? Will you not—"

"I will attend to my affairs as I think best, and without any meddling from any one!"

"But, father, all this has nothing to do with our difference of opinion as to my choice of a career. It is simply an appeal in the name of a common humanity. Will you not do this much at least? Will you go down to Bowen street and see things for yourself?"

"I will not! My agent attends to all the business."

"Have you ever been there? Have you ever looked at the misery there with your own eyes?"

"It is none of your business!" Rufus Gordon started up in his chair and confronted his son. This time the man's cheeks had a deep red spot on them, and his fingers twitched nervously. The stoop of his shoulders, the wrinkles about his eyes, the whole pose and attitude revealed to John Gordon even more than during that memorable interview when his father had refused to give his sanction to his son's choice, the aging of vital forces that once had seemed incapable of weakness.

John Gordon clenched his hand, and repressed the words that trembled on his lips. If he spoke he knew he would say too much. After all, was he his father's judge? Yet if the property owners refused to act, what redress, what hope for the future? It was a horrible commercial system that permitted, with the municipal authorities' sanction or indifference, the brutal violation of ordinances that were on the

statute books but never executed, spit upon by officers and citizens alike, a mockery to all decent government.

For a minute father and son faced each other silently. Then John Gordon turned, and without another word went away. But as he walked down the steps of the massive stone building, his heart was sore within him.

"My own father! My own father!" he repeated over and over, and tears dimmed his eyes and sobs choked his throat as he said the words.

Nevertheless with that fixity of purpose which always ignored private feelings in the face of public duty, he considered his morning task only just begun. He must see Mr. Marsh, and he walked straightway to his office, which was near by.

Mr. Marsh had just come, and when John Gordon appeared at the door of his private office he greeted his visitor heartily, saying as he motioned Gordon to a chair, "Glad to see you. Where have you been lately? Been on the point of dropping you a note asking you to come and dine. You and Luella haven't quarreled, have you? Come to think of it she's looked rather sober lately."

Mr. Marsh was a large handsome man of fifty-two. His manner was hearty, his whole bearing confident, with the air of one who has succeeded in every business enterprise he ever undertook. As a man of large wealth, of university training, and some degree of culture, of which perhaps he was unduly conscious, he was reckoned among the solid business men of the city, and was always proud to see his name used in that connection.

"Luella has not told you then?" John Gordon asked in a low tone.

"Told me what?"

"She refuses to marry me."

"Refuses to marry you?" Mr. Marsh spoke in astonishment.

"Why—why—why how is that, Gordon? You are old enough to know your own minds!"

"I thought so sir," John Gordon replied almost bitterly. "But Luella thinks otherwise. She will never be my wife."

"It's not so serious a break as that?" the older man spoke with great kindness and came over nearer. He was really fond of Gordon, and the unexpected news affected him deeply.

"Yes sir. To make a long story short I asked Luella to go into Hope House as a resident with me. She refused and—"

"Into Hope House! And you expected her to live there with you?"

"I certainly asked her to. Whether I expected her to or not, I am not quite so certain."

"You asked too much!" the words came sharp and incisive, and John Gordon at first shrank back as if from a blow. "You had no right to expect a girl brought up as Luella has been to make such a complete change in her life as such a course would demand. It was unreasonable."

"Perhaps it was," replied John Gordon quietly. "Nevertheless I made it and I—"

"You have come to ask my intercession with Luella? I am sorry, but I don't think I can ever grant it. As I say, your demand is unreasonable. I don't object so much

to the reform business I have heard you discuss, but there are extremes I cannot sanction. I would never wish to see my daughter living in such surroundings as those of Hope House."

"I have not come to ask you to make any intercession for me, Mr. Marsh. The matter between Luella and myself has been settled by her own refusal, and I am not going to trouble her or you by any pleading."

"Why—why—" Mr. Marsh seemed unable to frame a sentence that fitted the occasion and John said calmly,

"What I came to see you about, Mr. Marsh, is a matter connected with certain tenement property on Bowen street in the Waterside district near Hope House. I have been making certain investigations there, and in the course of them I find that you own or control tenements number 91 and 97."

Mr. Marsh struck a bell on his desk, and when a clerk appeared, he asked him to bring a volume from the safe. When it was brought, and the clerk had gone out, he turned over the pages until he came to a certain number.

"91 and 97; that's right. Fronting Bowen street and in the Waterside district. Well?"

John Gordon paused a moment. He had not the remotest inkling as to Mr. Marsh's probable action. His experience with his father had given him reason to believe that what Miss Andrews had said about the Golden Rule in business was only too true. Beside if that experience had not come to him, there remained the deadening fact of the tenements themselves, which preached powerfully of the landlord's neglect.

"Those tenements, Mr. Marsh, are simply a disgrace to civilization. I do not like to believe that you know the real facts about them, and I have come here to-day to ask you, as a man with a man's feelings, and with a man's powers, to help right some of the dreadful wrongs that humanity suffers in those buildings."

Mr. Marsh did not move a muscle. There was not a quiver or a change of color on his face to indicate to John Gordon whether he was angry, or indifferent, or interested. And the first question he asked when John Gordon paused, did not reveal to Gordon the man's real feeling.

"Why don't you go to the Board of Health and make a complaint?"

"Will you go with me, Mr. Marsh? But I don't go there first because you as the owner of the property can, if you will, make most of these wrong conditions right. Take for example the double decker, the dumb bell tenement No. 91. That is simply an instance of the worst form of tenement building in existence. There is nothing to compare with it, not even in the cities of the old world. The testimony of as high an authority as Jacob Riis says 'The Committee, after looking in vain through the slums of the old world cities for something to compare the double deckers with, declared that in their setting, the separateness and sacredness of home life were interfered with, and evils bred, physical and moral that conduce to the corruption of the young.' That this is true must be evident, Mr. Marsh, to any man who knows the construction of these houses. And as owner of one of them, you must be more or less familiar with their evils, and I plead with you to help remove them as far as possible."

There was a moment of very embarrassing silence which Mr. Marsh finally broke by saying,

"To be very frank with you, Gordon, I must tell you I never have seen the property you describe."

"Never saw it! And you are the owner!"

"The lots came into my possession just before I went abroad five years ago. My agent was instructed to put up tenements on the lots. The actual work was done while I was away. It certainly does not sound very humane, or even business like, but the fact is, I have never been down to look after the property. Davis is very prompt with his remittances, and the tenements have been good paying investments. From his specifications and plans as he submitted them from the contractor, I understood the buildings were substantial, and they certainly have proved a source of steady and handsome income. You say they are called dumb bell tenements, or double deckers?"

John Gordon sat still, looking at the man in wonderment mingled with indignation. That a business man, with the reputation of Mr. Marsh, could actually be guilty of such indifference and neglect was almost beyond belief. It was not until other events threw light on the subject, that Gordon fully understood the shrinking that Mr. Marsh had from contact with any form of human degradation and misery.

As John Gordon remained silent, Mr. Marsh uttered a short laugh and said uneasily,

"I don't wonder you think it very queer that I have never been down there. Of course I have trusted Davis implicitly.

At the same time, I have of necessity been ignorant of conditions. You regard them as bad?"

"Bad! They are simply beyond any description. It is useless for me to attempt it, Mr. Marsh," Gordon spoke with tremendous earnestness, for there was one word that Marsh had dropped that gave him hope— "You said it did not sound very humane to say you had never seen that property. Will you go with me and look at it? I cannot tell you the facts. If I were to give them to you, as they are, I am actually afraid you would not believe me. There are thousands of business men in this city who do not know the horrors that are congested in and around Bowen street and Long avenue and High Lane. But if you have any heart in you, you cannot be unmoved by the sight down there. In the name of the suffering babies and little children, I beg of you, Mr. Marsh, come with me and see with your own eyes. You lost a little child once, Mr. Marsh. I remember Luella telling me, your first born son. In the name of that sacred memory, will you take an interest in the dying, innocent children in your own tenements?"

In his sudden appeal to this long distant, but never forgotten experience, John Gordon made the one plea that perhaps could have moved Philo Marsh sufficiently to overcome his repugnance to every form of human suffering. He remained silent a moment, then lifting his eyes to Gordon he said gravely,

"Very well, I'll go with you. When shall we go?"

"I will suit my time to your convenience. I would like to have you note the conditions by day and night. I can go with you any time."

"Say to-morrow afternoon and night then."

"Will you take dinner with Miss Andrews at Hope House?" John Gordon ventured to say.

Mr. Marsh hesitated. "Why—yes—I will if it is customary."

"I know Miss Andrews will welcome you. To-morrow at two, if that will suit you, I will meet you here and we can inspect the tenements, take dinner at six, and go out again for a look at night. Thank you."

John Gordon spoke with quiet but deep satisfaction. He had scored an important point. How important he did not know, but it was a vital beginning to any influence he might hope to exert over the property owners.

As he started to go out, Mr. Marsh spoke slowly.

"About Luella? There is no prospect of an agreement between you?"

"Not any that I can see."

"I'm sorry." The words were genuine, and John Gordon was touched by them.

"Thank you, Mr. Marsh!" He shook hands firmly and went out with a tear in his eye, but it was not the same as that which the interview with his own father had provoked.

"Thank God! He seems to have a heart, at least!" John Gordon exclaimed, as he went down into his Gehenna again.

Between two and three o'clock the next day Mr. Marsh and John Gordon were in Bowen street, and standing in front of the building on lot 91, known as the "dumb bell tenement," which, according to one famous Tenement House Commission, "is the one hopeless form of tenement construction. It cannot be well ventilated; it cannot be well lighted;

it is not safe in case of fire; direct light is only possible for the rooms at front and rear. The middle rooms must borrow what light they can from dark hallways, the shallow shafts, and the rear rooms. Their air must pass through other rooms, or tiny shafts, and cannot but be contaminated before it reaches them." (New York Tenement Commission 1894.)

John Gordon could not help noticing the shrinking manner of Mr. Marsh. The man seemed to be under an influence that could not be fear or even compassion. It was rather a mingling of disgust and physical dread.

"Shall we go in?" John Gordon said, looking at his companion curiously.

"Wait a moment," cried Marsh. "I want to look at the street."

The two men stood still, and the older, for the first time in his life, saw a sight that he had never dreamed could exist in a civilized city, that was at least nominally Christian.

It would be impossible to picture Bowen street by means of a photograph. No skill of the photographer or artist could reproduce the scene, and human language is as weak as the brush or camera to tell the story.

The street swarmed with children. It was midsummer and the day itself was hot but not one of the hottest of the season. There was not a tree, or shrub, or flower, not a bit of grass, not even a weed, to relieve the dull sickening look of sunsmitten brick and wood and stone.

In front of every other house stood a garbage box, or what had once been one. The majority of these boxes were rotting heaps of boards without covers, overflowing with wet stuff composed of decaying vegetables, the sweepings from

the tables of the people, and the litter of paper, tin cans, and refuse that had not been disturbed by inspectors or garbage wagons for several weeks. There was not a whole piece of sidewalk on either side of the street. Pieces of rotting plank stood on end, or lay partly over the alleys, in some cases thrust down between the decaying timbers, sticking above the regular level, a hideous menace, a miserable object lesson, out of hundreds more, of the mournfull fact of municipal incompetency and debauchery of machine politics. Mr. Marsh learned afterwards that more than fifteen hundred suits were pending against the city for serious injuries, due to the defective sidewalks, and that the sum total of damages claimed was more than \$22,500,000. (See proceedings of Regular Meeting of Chicago City Council Jan. 8, 1900.) The children in the street were playing, quarreling, digging in the garbage boxes, in many instances picking bits of decayed lemons, bananas, and oranges out of the gutter.

One group of boys was tormenting a miserable cat. Another group was yelling at a police officer who had just ordered them out of the street, where they had been trying to have a game of ball. Over the steps of the tenement entrances, some of them high enough to be designated "stoops," women holding sick babies, or little girls staggering under the load of a child two or three years younger, filled up the picture of sodden, unkempt, disheveled, tired out humanity, that turned that awful street into a human hell, where no alleviating bit of cheer or relief was inserted to give one ray of hope for the future.

The only buildings in front of which there were no steps, were the saloons. These averaged five to a block, and one

on each corner. The corner saloons, with a few exceptions, also had attached to them vaudeville halls, with staring lamp signs "Free Vaudeville," hung out over the entrances.

It has been said that no living being ever successfully described Bowen street so that a person who never saw it could have even the faintest conception of its truth. Mr. Marsh had never seen anything like it, and all his reading had never given him any idea whatever of the reality. He stared at it all now in a bewildered, almost frightened manner, that grasped only a part of the terrible significance of it all.

Finally he turned to John Gordon and said with a tone in which irritation was the dominant note,

"Why don't some of these children go over and play in the Hope House play grounds, instead of rolling in this awful filth? I understood you to say that Hope House had a play ground."

John Gordon looked at Mr. Marsh, at first with a feeling of indignation, which rapidly changed to one of sadness.

"How many children can play in a space shut in and bounded by a lot less than fifty feet wide and one hundred feet long? It is crowded to overflowing now. Do you know how many years Miss Andrews pleaded and begged and prayed, and turned mountains of selfish indifference and commercial greed, to get that little play ground?"

"I have no idea. Hadn't we better go inside now?" Mr. Marsh replied feebly. "Let's get through with it. I had no idea it was all so horrible. Of course this is unusually bad, isn't it?"

"There are fifty other streets as bad or worse, within two miles of Hope House."

"Why don't they get new garbage boxes at least?" Mr. Marsh exclaimed in the same irritated manner. He had begun by being sick at the sight of the fearful conditions. He was now growing angry.

"Who do you mean by 'they,' Mr. Marsh?" John Gordon said, with some bitterness. "The landlords? The city ordinance makes it obligatory on the landlords to furnish and keep in good repair garbage boxes sufficient in size to accommodate the number of families in their tenements."

Mr. Marsh looked at the box in front of his own double decker, and said nothing.

It was a rotten apology for what had once been a small box. It had only three sides and no cover. It was filled to overflowing, and crowning the heap of stench was a dead chicken swarming with maggots. It was a fair sample of every other box in Bowen street, and in its loathsome and naked uncleanness it stood there, in the blaze of the pitiless sun a dumb, but ghastly and overwhelming witness against the cultured indifference of the men who are not willing to be their brother's keepers, so long as they can live luxuriously on their brother's needs, at a distance from all suffering and responsibility.

They went into the narrow court that separated the rear from the front of the building, and John Gordon pointed out the deadly nature of the construction.

"There is no direct sunlight in any of these rooms that open on the court. All light and air must enter either where we did, or come in from the top!"

He uttered the word in time to prevent Mr. Marsh from stumbling over a projection in the shape of a raised platform, built out from the side wall shortening the distance between the main walls of the court. The use of the platform was, as he afterwards learned, to furnish a little additional room for hanging out clothes, which were suspended above the platform on a series of racks.

The floor of the court or passage way between the two wings of the "dumb bell" was slippery with filth of every description. In the semi-darkness which prevailed in spite of the sun's glare outside, could be seen pale, tired women with sallow, dirty faces, peering out from doorway and window. The heat was stifling, as not a breath blew in at either end of the passage, and the odor was overpowering.

Mr. Marsh hesitated.

"I don't know that I care to go in," he said almost in a tone of fear.

"Too late to back out now, Mr. Marsh. Come! It will do you good. Make you more contented with your home on the boulevard!" John Gordon said grimly.

He greeted the group of women in the doorway, and they returned his greeting civilly enough, for he was wearing his regular inspector's badge, authorized by the Board of Health; and besides all that, he had already in the course of his brief study made friends in the block.

Almost the first step they took from the doorway plunged them into darkness. Gordon had hold of Mr. Marsh's arm, and was silent until they came to the first flight of stairs at the end of the passage.

"Have to be a little careful here, sir," he cautioned. "This

is an old part, joining your part from the rear. It was on the lot when your agent looked over the space and he built up to the limit and a little more. In fact he broke six distinct ordinances in using up the space that ought to have been left open between the new building and the old. But that was nothing to him, for it added six feet to the double decker, and that meant twelve additional bedrooms. Have care here. Some of the stair treads are broken."

Mr. Marsh uttered an ejaculation, and Gordon stopped.

"I feel ill. I don't believe I can go on, Gordon. This is terrible. It is past belief that human beings can live in such conditions."

"They don't all live, sir. Some of them die. But it's almost as bad to die in here as to live. You ought to see a funeral in one of these tenements."

"God forbid!" exclaimed Mr. Marsh emphatically. "Honestly, Gordon, it may seem absurd to you, but I am growing sick from the awful stench here. I doubt my ability to go on."

Gordon made no answer. After a moment Mr. Marsh said feebly,

"All right. I'll try to stand it."

Without any reply John Gordon, still keeping his hand on his companion's arm, began to go up the stairs. Under their feet they could feel the slimy filth that had accumulated for weeks. Half way up something passed them going down. It was a little girl about eight years old carrying in her arms a baby. In the dim light which filtered through the hall at the top of the flight, the two men could hardly make out this child of the tenements, burdened long years before the time with a human responsibility, robbed of playground, and

childhood, and thrust into a world of suffering and discomfort. Poor mournful creature, a woman in gravity, and a child in years, bending your dirty face over the gasping little sister in your slim arms, sitting on the steps late into the night, with the bundle that may actually die in your arms, and no one but yourself feel much grief, if it does. Child of the tenements, you do not know it, but it is a beautiful world that God has made. There are trees, and flowers, and clear water, and perfumed zephyrs and grass dotted with bloom. But oh for you, little sister, who shall reveal its beauty, who shall discover to you its glory, O child of the tenements, in the great city by the Lakes?"

At the top of the stairs John Gordon paused a moment and then turned to the left and led his companion along to a doorway opening on a corridor looking out on the air shaft. A railing ran around this corridor, and leaning over it were a number of persons, mostly women, some of them holding babies, others doing some kind of work. One woman at the end of the corridor was preparing some dish for supper. The stench that rose from the court below was made doubly intolerable by the smoke from the chimneys of the rear tenements on the adjoining lot, which drifted into the corridor and swept into every doorway.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Caylor. How is the little boy today?"

"Poorly, sir. Will you go in and see him?" Then she glanced suspiciously at Mr. Marsh and added. "But you can't do anything for him. Better leave him be."

"This is Mr. Marsh, Mrs. Caylor. He is the owner of the building. He wants to see some of the rooms. We can go in?"

The woman's face lighted up just for a second, then all died out to that dull indifference which has long ago lost all hope of any thing better farther on.

"I don't care," she answered with sullen indifference.

John Gordon at once turned into the room and Mr. Marsh reluctantly followed. There were two windows but both opened on the corridor. Gordon walked across to an opening and turned to beckon Mr. Marsh, who had stopped.

"I want you to see a specimen of a dark bedroom, Mr. Marsh. You don't need to visit more than one. But it is worth knowing that there are hundreds more like this one."

Mr. Marsh came across to Gordon's side.

"This is more terrible than I ever dreamed," he said in a whisper.

"Nothing when you get used to it, sir. Let's step in. There isn't much to see."

They entered the room, which was absolutely dark, except for the light that entered through the room they had just left. Gordon felt his way until his hand touched something and then he said gently,

"Louie, how are you to-day?"

"Not very well. That you, Mr. Gordon?"

"Yes. I've brought you something. Here! Catch on, little man."

"It's fine!" the thin eager voice exclaimed. "Don't tell mother. She'll take it away."

"No, no, Louie. She won't. The doctor will let you have it." John Gordon said reassuringly, and then he was silent. Mr. Marsh was close by, and both men stood still a moment,

In the stillness a distinct rustling sound could be heard. It was like the rustling of tissue paper or the scratching of small mice.

"What's that?" Mr. Marsh asked.

"Wait a minute, I'll show you," Gordon answered quietly. "Shut your eyes, Louie. I'm going to light a match."

He struck the match and held it up. The pale light revealed in the few seconds that the match burned, a broken bedstead and a ragged filthy mattress on which lay a child about ten years old. The walls of the room had once been papered, before the double decker had been constructed, so that some of it had blocked up the windows that had once opened on the rear lot. This paper now hung in festoons and strings all over the ceiling, and Mr. Marsh, looking in horror at the sight, in that brief moment, not too brief to tell one whole story of the tenement house hell, saw countless swarms of bugs and vermin crawling over the paper. It was that that had made the noise.

The match flickered and went out. There was a moment of silence broken by Gordon, who said cheerfully,

"All right, Louie! Keep up good heart. I'll try to get in and see you to-morrow."

"Thank you, Mr. Gordon."

Mr. Marsh pulled at Gordon's arm.

"For God's sake, Gordon, let's get out of here. I'm growing sick. I shall faint."

"Come out into the fresh air!" Gordon said ironically.

They went out into the corridor and Mr. Marsh, in his eagerness to get out of the building, did not even stop to reply to several of the women, who had learned from Mrs.

Caylor that he owned the double decker, and crowded up to complain about the garbage boxes and the drain pipes. While Gordon was talking with Mrs. Caylor about Louie, Mr. Marsh went down, hurried as fast as he dared through the lower court, and when John Gordon came out, he found him seated on the outer steps, deathly pale and actually sick.

Gordon grimly eyed him.

"It's only four o'clock. We'll have time to do the other. There are some features of number 97 that are peculiar. I would like to have you see them."

"I cannot go, Gordon. It's out of the question. I am too ill."

"Let's go over to Hope House then," John Gordon said gravely.

Mr. Marsh with difficulty walked over to Hope House. On the way Gordon said,

"There is an ordinance which says that there shall be spaces between front and rear tenements, graduated according to the height of the building. If the tenement is one story high, there must be ten feet between front and rear. If two stories fifteen feet. If four stories, twenty-five feet, &c. Your agent deliberately ignored this law, and built your double decker so as to cover all the space. In doing so he deliberately established a condition that permitted of no light in a dozen bedrooms like the one we went into. More than that; he created conditions that breed anarchy. For if the rich and cultured citizens of this municipality for their own gain selfishly trample on the laws of the city, what can they expect from the poor, and the desperate, and the ignorant, but hatred of all society?"

"I'm too sick to discuss it," Mr. Marsh groaned. Gordon saw that he was actually suffering severely, and when they entered Hope House he gave him careful attention.

It was only a temporary indisposition however. And after resting an hour, Mr. Marsh recovered sufficiently to sit up, and expressed some mortification at the way he had behaved, he said. But his manner was very grave, and the experience of his visit to the building was evidently making a profound impression on him.

To Gordon's disappointment Miss Andrews had been called away and was not present at the evening meal. Mr. Marsh was able to be at the table with the residents and was a close listener to the talk, although he said little.

"Do you feel equal to a little work this evening, Mr. Marsh?" Gordon asked, after the residents had adjourned to the library, and had begun to scatter for their several duties.

"I think so; yes." Mr. Marsh answered. He was really ashamed of his inability to endure unusual sights of disagreeable human suffering.

"Then perhaps we had better visit one of the Vaudeville Halls. I want you to see how the saloon, as a political institution, comes in to supplement the absence of home life. Perhaps it will help you to understand better, if you want to, why the tenement house conditions are not interfered with, and why it is to the interest of the politician, that the people suffer as far as endurance will go, in the matter of no homes."

At nine o'clock in company with an officer in citizen's clothes, who was detailed to look after Hope House district,

Gordon and Marsh entered one of the Vaudeville Halls, joining a corner saloon on Bowen street. Mr. Marsh was unusually excited. His university training, his exclusive, refined culture, his sensitive habits, were all the exact opposite of everything he had felt and seen since he entered Hope House district. He went in with Gordon, and they took seats in the rear of the sawdust-covered floor, in a hall that would hold two hundred persons. They faced a gaudily painted curtain, which let down in front of a small stage. The hall rapidly filled up with men and boys. The air was heavy with the fumes of beer and tobacco. The night was sultry, and at the saloon bar, which was visible through the doorway opening into the Hall, could be seen a long line of men and women drinking, while others stood behind the line reaching their hands over for glasses, or waiting their turn to get up to the bar itself.

Three violins, a harp, and a piano began to play and the curtain went up. At that very moment, in Christian homes all over America, good women kneeled at clean beds, by the side of pure hearted little children, to repeat the evening prayer to the good God. But will the time speedily come, when little voices shall swell the thunder of the good God's wrath against an institution that carries into homeless deserts of the great cities the plague of death, the foul touch of lost virtue for the sake of gold?

CHAPTER V.



THE moment Gordon and Mr. Marsh had taken their seats in the hall, a man with a white apron came up, and standing directly in front of them said, "What'll you have?"

"Cigars for three," said the officer. And as the man slowly moved away, after giving the three visitors a sharp look, the officer said, in answer to the question from Mr. Marsh, "O, the show's free. So's the lunch. But everybody is expected to take something. The saloons ain't doing this for their health, nor for the love of the people, not if they know it."

"What if we refused to buy either cigars or beer?" Gordon asked, for he had never entered one of the Vaudeville Halls but once before, and had then gone in to hunt for one of the young men who had been attending the night classes at Hope House. His knowledge of the character of the entertainment was gained from Ford, the University resident.

The officer shrugged his shoulders.

"They'd make it mighty uncomfortable for you before you got out or got in again. The saloon may be a social necessity to the poor devils in the double deckers, but it don't furnish social amusements without getting mighty well paid for it. It's free, but it's expensive," said officer Roberts.

As he finished speaking, the bartender came back with the cigars and a tray loaded with beer and whisky. The liquor was distributed around on little tables, at which the boys and men in the audience were mostly seated. As the curtain went up to the music of the orchestra, there were about one hundred and fifty in the room, and a stream of newcomers noisily entering. Before the first song was finished, the hall was filled to suffocation.

As the entertainment, if it could be called such, went on, John Gordon's soul was stirred deep with a red-blooded indignation. After the first two or three vulgar songs, which were followed by some suggestive dances, he sat there practically hearing and seeing nothing on the stage. The audience had become the absorbing study for him. The people! There they were! His choice! To serve and to love! But was it worth while?

The majority of the company was composed of young men between eighteen and twenty-five years of age. They were as a type, pale, listless, and astonishingly dull of expression. John Gordon was irresistibly drawn to imagine the exact appearance of the rooms that these young men probably called home. He then began to raise a host of questions concerning their parentage, their occupations, their wages, the amount they probably spent on the saloon and the places they went to on Sunday. The absolute absence of anything interesting or elevating in their lives, impressed him with tremendous reality. All the churches in the city were on the fine streets miles away. There was not a religious institution, with the possible exception of Hope House, that had any influence in the lives of these apathetic, coarsened, dissipated

young men. The vaudeville and the saloon touched their lives, but the church never did. Yet it was the sinner that Jesus came to save. Was the church realizing her responsibility, to neglect this awful swarm of youth that bred like disease in the tenement, and cursed God and died, in the impure atmosphere of these polluted walls? God have mercy on them! Are they more sinned against than sinning? Can a boy or girl grow up pure and good in tenements like these we have here in this greed-smitten city? And the one social institution that comes forward to minister to the social instincts is the saloon! It says to the tired working man who has no place worthy to be called a home, "Come! Enjoy a social glass in a handsome, well lighted, cheerful room." It says to the man whose appetite is never satisfied with ill prepared food, "Come! enjoy a free lunch! Only of course you will want beer or whisky to wash it down." And without saying this to the man, only to itself, the saloon, with devilish foresight, reckons on getting back, by means of the "free lunch," one hundred per cent. in the actual sale of drinks. Truly officer Roberts is right when he says "it's free, but it's expensive!"

It says to the young man who has no healthy outlet for physical life, because he is born without play grounds, and without home pleasures, "Come! In the vaudeville, I will amuse you. The songs and the dances will be suggestive, and the young women who furnish the amusement are fallen, but vice is a necessity to civilization, and we stand ready to furnish what the church and other religious organizations will never give you!"

"Surely," John Gordon meditated, "The saloon in its day

and generation is wiser than the children of light. The devil must dance in glee over the sight of the tenement and slum districts in the city, as he sees his finest agents occupying the field of social panderers to a human necessity, while the solemn, empty, stone edifices, called churches, stand stately and still, up on the grand boulevards, and open their doors once or twice a week to receive proud men and women, clothed in purple and fine linen, who fare sumptuously every day, who enjoy their religion, but do not enjoy practicing it among sinners, at least not among sinners like those who are born in tenements and get their nourishment in saloon and vaudeville. Surely the saloon is giving the churches pointers on how to reach the masses. Will the churches take the broad hint and act on it, or will they still allow the saloon to preempt the corner lots, and under the hypocritical guise of catering to a social craving, damn with physical and moral damnation lives, that have never known any other gospel but the gospel of beer and free lunches as long as they are able to pay for them?

His meditation was going deeper, and he was beginning to philosophize, not bitterly, but with genuine sadness, when he saw Mr. Marsh suddenly arise and clutch his arm hard.

"I can't bear any more of this," he said, as Gordon glanced up at him. "I'm going out. It's too revolting. I've seen all I care to."

"And when you've seen one of 'em you've seen all of 'em," said officer Roberts with a shrug. Gordon looked towards the stage. A dance that was simply revolting in its indecency, was being performed. A roar of brutal laughter rose from the audience. It was like a picture taken from some scene

in the Inferno. Gordon's spirit flamed up in holy wrath at the sight and sound of it, but he got up and went out with Marsh and the officer.

Once outside, even in the tainted, beer-poisoned air that floated out of the saloon all three of the men breathed easier. Officer Roberts looked towards Gordon with an air of resignation.

"Does your friend wish to continue? I may be allowed to say the show is the same one place as another, same songs, same dances—"

"No more for me," Mr. Marsh interrupted quickly. "Gordon, I'm simply sick of it all. Let us go back to Hope House. I should like to meet Miss Andrews before going home. You thought she would be back after supper?"

"Yes, but I want you to see Bowen street by night. Just two or three blocks, and I'll not ask any more."

"Very well." Mr. Marsh reluctantly consented. He was evidently laboring under great stress of feeling. His sensitive nature had suffered in ways that were very unusual.

"It won't be necessary for you to go along, Roberts," Gordon said as the officer stood waiting.

"Much obliged, sir," Roberts answered with a look of relief. "I'm at your service of course. Miss Andrews gave special orders to me to be of any help to you that I can."

"It will not be necessary, Roberts. Much obliged. We'll simply walk through the street and not attempt any inside work to night."

"All right, sir." The officer turned back to Hope House playground, which he had overseen ever since it had become an important institution, and Gordon, taking Mr. Marsh's

arm, walked down Bowen street for three blocks, then turned and came back on the opposite sidewalk.

If the street had been full during the day, it was running over at night. The "stoops" were literally packed with people. The child of the tenements, with her little sister in her arms was there, bending over the armful, sitting on the steps, in various degrees of discomfort and unconscious misery, but cheerful, resigned, and apparently born to her task.

The night was breathless, and yet out on the wide boulevard it was not stifling. Down here however, not a single sigh of fresh air came. The garbage boxes rotted visibly. On the covers of those few boxes that still retained covers, were lying men and boys, trying in the midst of the unnatural, feverish noises peculiar to tenement districts, to get a little rest. On the stones, and mud, and offal of the street itself, scores of people were lying, some on a few rags thrown down to soak up the liquid filth, others with no covering between their horrible clothing and the foul street. Twice they had to stop and pick their way between the figures that lay in the street, panting for a breath of air, wearily, but with the indifference of years of accustomed discomfort, counting the time when the dark sleeping rooms inside should become a little less unbearable.

During the entire walk neither Gordon nor Marsh said anything but once, when Mr. Marsh asked a question.

"Some of these children seem far better dressed and cleaner, more attractive than others. Are these some of the Hope House converts?"

"No," replied John Gordon dryly. "Those are saloon-keeper's children."

Mr. Marsh did not ask any more questions until they were going into Hope House entrance. Then he turned to his companion and said,

"I have seen things to-day I never could believe if I had been told. It is all too horrible, too horrible. I shall dream of it to-night. Why have you made me look at it?"

They paused a moment under the archway.

"Would God, Mr. Marsh that every business man in this city could see what you have seen. And what you have seen is nothing, compared with the horrors you will never even dream about!"

"It has sickened me!" Mr. Marsh repeated irritably, and John Gordon could see by his manner that he was nervously affected by the day's experience. Before he could say anything Miss Andrews came in through the archway.

"I understand you have been looking about to-day; come into the library and tell me about it."

She had greeted Gordon in her usual quiet, calm, but delightful manner as he introduced Mr. Marsh.

When they were seated at the great center table, Gordon briefly recited the main incidents of the day's experience. Gradually Mr. Marsh lost his irritation. There was something profoundly impressive in the face and manner of this woman. She was the first woman he had ever met, who made him feel that she was deeply and exactly informed on city life. He had met other women who were brilliant, witty, well educated, cultured, but never one who evidently knew humanity like this one. In five minutes she seemed to be in

full possession of all the facts of Mr. Marsh's ownership of the property, and his exact attitude in every particular towards the scenes he had witnessed. The talk had not proceeded ten minutes, before she said with the utmost frankness,

"Mr. Marsh, I am sure you will tear down No. 91 and put up the right kind of a building in its place. Of course you are convinced now that the structure is a mistake in every particular."

"I—I—don't know. I certainly did not know what sort of a building it was—it would prove to be," Mr. Marsh stammered.

"Then of course your judgment and humanity together will prompt you to put up a safe, sanitary, comfortable building," Miss Andrews continued calmly.

"I—I—will have to give the matter—ah—considerable consideration," Mr. Marsh replied with caution. "It will be very expensive to tear it down."

"It costs lives. Are they not of more value, Mr. Marsh, than money?"

She said it calmly, but the repressed passion of a lifetime of patient endurance, for the love of the people, pulsed through every syllable. A voice of tenderest eloquence could not have been more definitely emphatic.

"I shall have to consider it," the man murmured uneasily.

The events of the strange day had produced a curious result in him. He was not certain that he could trust his impulses. At the same time he felt moved to action of some kind.

Miss Andrews quietly began to talk of something else. John Gordon who had leaned over the table, intensely interested in what he supposed was going to be an appeal on Miss Andrews' part, gradually relaxed his attitude into one of disappointed surprise. Miss Andrews was still talking easily, and Mr. Marsh was listening intently, when one of the residents came in and called John Gordon out to answer a summons at the telephone.

Gordon came back soon and said his friend Barton had sent for him, and that he might not return that night.

Mr. Marsh rose and said, "I'll go along with you, Gordon, as far as you go my way."

He said good night to Miss Andrews and the two passed out from under the archway, and when he and Gordon parted up town, Mr. Marsh said with a short laugh,

"Miss Andrews came near making me a convert. But it would kill me to live there, and see those things every day. I don't see how she stands such a life."

Gordon did not reply. He had spoken hardly a word all the way. The weight of all the misery that lay on the people bore him down. In the presence of this oversensitive, cultured, wealthy man who had it in his power to right the wrongs that were connected with his own possessions, Gordon felt a repulsion that he feared would break out, in word or manner. Would Mr. Marsh do anything? Would he rebuild the tenement? Would he correct any of the abuses? Why did Miss Andrews cease so suddenly to talk about it? Why did she not plead with him? She seemed on the point of doing so. In a moment of impulse he spoke, as Mr. Marsh was moving away.

"Mr. Marsh, you have it in your power to save the lives of those children. If Louie dies in that hole, before God, I believe you will be held part guilty in the sight of God. Are you going to do anything?"

"I'll do something," Mr. Marsh replied feebly.

"Then in God's name do it quick, won't you?"

"I'll consider it; yes I'll consider it."

Gordon let him go with that, and with the weariness of the day bearing down on his spirit, he hastened to Barton's rooms fearing bad news, for Barton had telephoned, himself, asking his friend to come at once.

He found Barton lying on the couch in the second room.

"Come in, old man!" he said feebly, but cheerfully. "Excuse me for sending for you, but my cough got so wild this evening about seven o'clock that I thought you would like to see the show. It's a rattling good performance. Three rings, and a drove of elephants, and a trained automobile don't describe it."

John Gordon looked mournfully at the recumbent figure. The truth was very apparent to him. The great eyes that glowed in the face stamped by death's trade mark, burned like wasting fires. It was evident that the time was short now. But after all it came as a shock to John Gordon. He had not really been expecting it.

"What have you been doing? Amuse me with it. I went down to the office this morning but Harris sent me back. I tell you he's not half bad. And—oh—there's a matter I want to explain. Have you seen the evening edition? No? There's a copy on the table. Don't blame me. I kept the business out as long as I could. Might never have got in if

I hadn't been off duty. Miss Andrews used her influence and actually went to see Harris herself. She did miracles in keeping matters out of all the papers, for more than a week. But Harris got word that the Review was going to run in a story and I suppose he couldn't stand it—so—don't blame me John. I'm sorry—but I'm not—”

He sat up so that his knees touched his chin and began coughing so terribly that John Gordon, on his knees by the side of the couch, feared that the end would come then and there. But the spell did not last as long as he feared, and Barton said as soon as he was able to speak.

“She's getting out of gasoline or something. That spurt she made, at seven thirty, winded her. There! Let me down again. And give me that stuff in the bottle. It's no particular good, only it keeps the cough from thinking of me all the time, the stuff's so strong, and bad tasting.”

Gordon gave him the medicine and Barton lay back exhausted. After a moment he whispered,

“Read the story if you want to. But if you are going to swear, or anything, at the close, and want help, ask Williams to go out into the hall. Give him a dollar, and he'll pitch into Harris and the News, as long as you want.”

John Gordon picked up the paper, and went over by the table. He seldom saw the News, and never read it. His whole refined nature rebelled in disgust at the monstrosity of yellow journalism. But his curiosity was strong enough to make him read what Barton seemed so genuinely sorry for.

The head lines were bold and obtrusive:

“Quarrels with his Father!

John Gordon Son of

Rufus Gordon, the Banker
and Stock Manipulator
Goes to live at Hope
House. A Rich Slummer.
Breaks with his fiancée
Miss Luella Marsh. A
Stormy interview. Miss
Marsh refuses to go

with him. All the parties prominent in business and social circles. Mr. Gordon repudiates his son.

Miss Marsh refuses to talk. Does not deny interview with her former lover. John Gordon to make a special study of tenement house conditions in Bowen street."

The whole "story" occupied two columns, and directly under the head lines which covered two columns in width were two cuts, one of John Gordon and the other of Luella Marsh. The title under these cuts, read, "Cupid balks at Social Sacrifice."

John Gordon read the head lines and glared at the pictures. Then he crushed the paper between his hands and flung it on the floor.

"Ring the bell for Williams, John. I think he's in the pantry. You need his help to do it justice. Sorry I don't feel able to chip in with you."

For a moment John Gordon stood still by the table, then he came over and sat down by his friend.

"I don't care for myself, but Luella! David, it's a horrible invasion of all one's sacred private affairs. I have never understood how you could believe in that sort of journalism."

David Barton looked lovingly at John Gordon. His cyn-

ical, whimsical, reckless manner disappeared for a moment.

"I don't believe in it. Never did, John. It's purely business with me. I'm awfully sorry for you. What do I believe anyway? My whole life has contradicted my creed. But maybe there's hope for me yet. What do you think? Am I too bad to repent and be saved?"

John Gordon stared at his friend, and in a moment his own deep, abiding, religious experience reminded him that here was a soul groping after light.

"David!" he exclaimed softly. "No one is too bad to repent and be saved. Oh, David, Christ makes all life worth while."

"I believe that," the reply came in a whisper. "I've never said much, John, but I've tried to—"

The usually cynical voice actually broke with a sob that cut John Gordon deep, although in that tense moment which had come on so swiftly, there was a fierce joy at the confession his friend had made.

He bent over and put a hand on Barton's. And they sat thus silent for a gracious moment. It was significant that neither of them had said a word about Barton's physical condition and his hopeless future, so far as physical life was concerned. The stillness in the room was suddenly interrupted by a clang out on the street.

Gordon went over to the window and looked out.

"The department is making a fine run," he said briefly to Barton.

It was late and the avenue was almost empty of traffic. A team of pure white horses, on the engine which preceded the hose and ladder wagons, plunged forward with a desperate

but glad abandon that struck fire from the pavement and whirled the engine along with a mad but glorious energy that made human blood run faster and kept the pulses beating with sympathy. The driver and his assistant leaned forward, their bare heads tossing their free hair behind; the whole scene flashed by in the night, like a bit torn out of a Roman chariot race of the dead past, transformed by chance to the modern municipality, whose streets are lighted with electricity, and whose buildings loom up in the smoky air like crags beside the prairie sea.

The whirling group swept around the corner at the end of the next block, slacking speed just enough to avoid turning over. John Gordon came back to David's side.

"Where is the fire?"

"I didn't notice the alarm. Must have been a still one."

"Have you ever thought what would happen, John, if a fire ever got a good chance around Hope House?"

"Have I? I think of it every time I go into the double decker. They are simply traps. If a fire ever started in the basement of No. 91 it would be a miracle if any body got out alive."

"How about Hope House itself?" The question showed uneasiness.

"Hope House is a dry old shell inside. It would go like tinder."

"The fire to-night is not down that way?"

"No. The teams turned up Favell street."

"Is No. 91 any worse than other numbers?"

"No. It's better in some ways. But there's a bakery in the basement. They fry greasy doughnuts over a cracked

stove. One drop of grease, catching fire in the place, might sweep a score of children into eternity."

"They'd be better off in eternity than in the tenement, wouldn't they? May be the best thing you could do, would be to pray for No. 91 to catch on fire when the wind's just right."

John Gordon made no answer, and Barton asked drowsily,

"How about Mr. Marsh? You dropped me a line about the probability of his having an interest in helping Miss Andrews financially."

"Mr. Marsh is the landlord of No. 91."

"Sho! You don't say!" The voice was awake again. "Then the amount of his contribution to Social Settlements is not yet made public!"

"Mr. Marsh has been with me through the District to-day. He saw his own tenement for the first time."

"That's a good story, tell me about it." The voice was again drowsy.

"It's too late, David," Gordon remonstrated.

"No, it isn't. I'm going to sleep here. I often do. It starts the cough if I get up again. I'm comfortable. You'll stay all night? You know your room. Do, that's a good fellow. I may want you to help me harness up the cough in the morning."

"Yes I'll stay if you want me to. Are you comfortable there?"

"Very much so, old man. Go ahead with Mr. Marsh."

Gordon had not talked five minutes before Barton was asleep, an unnatural slumber, more like death than healthy

refreshing of wearied powers. His whole attitude was that of complete exhaustion. The seal of death was upon him.

John Gordon stopped talking, and the tears rolled down his cheeks. David Barton was the dearest friend he had. The two were ten years apart in age but from the time when they first met, they had been instantly drawn together and had begun to love each other.

It was after eleven o'clock and yet Gordon hesitated to go to bed. He almost feared that Barton would never wake up, the pallor of his face, the attitude of the body were so suggestive of the great change.

He was still sitting there, his cheeks still wet with the tears that he did not try to repress, when Williams came in softly on tip toe.

"There's a queer old lady outside, Mr. Gordon, says she wants to see Mr. Barton, if it ain't too late. She's a mighty queer looking specimen. She won't go away, and I thought maybe you'd go and see her."

"Barton is asleep now. He can't be wakened. Ask the lady to come into the hall."

Gordon went out, drawing the curtains between the first room and the wide hall way, and met in the hall the visitor, who was promptly ushered in by Williams.

She was dressed in a remarkably old fashioned style that struck John Gordon as exceedingly interesting, rather than grotesque. She was very old, at least ninety, but straight and vigorous. Her keen blue eyes looked searchingly at John Gordon, and she spoke in a sharp but remarkably clear voice.

"Are you Mr. Barton?"

"No, Madam. I am his friend, Mr. Gordon. Mr. Barton is asleep and not well. What can I do for you? Will you be seated?"

"In a moment, sir." She placed upon the floor a faded old carpet bag, took a handkerchief out of her pocket, and carefully dusted one of the hall seats, and then carefully sat down. As she took out the handkerchief, a delicate aroma was wafted to John Gordon. It reminded him of the fragrance he remembered once while visiting the East India Marine Museum, at Salem, Massachusetts, when the attendant opened an old sea chest, lined with cedar, and packed with silk shawls.

John Gordon was now thoroughly awake. The sharp eyes looked at him kindly.

"I am exceedingly sorry to hear that Mr. Barton is ill. I very much wished to see him. First I must be pardoned for calling at this unseasonable hour. But I had the address, and saw the light, and knew that newspaper men kept queer hours. I have called at the office of the paper and was told Mr. Barton was at his apartments. I must go on my journey to-night—"

John Gordon had not the remotest inkling as to the old lady's errand. She was evidently a person of great refinement and culture.

"How much of a friend are you to Mr. Barton?"

The question was so direct and frank that Gordon smiled.

"I am his dearest friend."

"Man or woman?" The old lady asked with a twinkle of the eyes, that made John Gordon smile again.

"My friend has never had any love affairs. He is a confirmed bachelor."

"Ah, don't deceive yourself, young man. I am old enough to be your grandmother, your great-grandmother almost, and I have seen a great deal of the world. But pardon me, I must tell you what I came for."

She put her hand into a little bag that hung from a silk cord, tied about her wrist. As she opened the bag, the same delicate aroma penetrated the hall again.

She handed a card to Gordon. He took it and read,
Mrs. Captain George Effingham.

Salem.

"Well?" Gordon said.

"I am Captain Effingham's widow. My great grandson was born on the day Captain Effingham died. His name was Clark Effingham. He ran away to sea when he was sixteen. Since then I have heard nothing of him, until a week ago I had a letter from him dated Colorado Springs. He was consumptive, but is getting better. I am on my way to see him."

She paused and John Gordon, still in the dark as to the object of her call on Barton said,

"Well?"

"You said you were Mr. Barton's nearest friend? How much of his real life do you know?"

Gordon was thoroughly surprised. For the first time, he looked suspiciously, and even doubtfully at the old lady.

"I know him well. There is not a kinder, purer, truer soul in this city than David Barton."

"I believe you!" The old lady nodded vigorously. "But

I know more about him than you do. Listen! One night, six months ago, a young man penniless, homeless, alone in this great city was walking its streets in a cold penetrating rain. An east wind blew off the water. The young man was proud. He would not write his relatives for help. He was afraid to let his aristocratic grandmother know that he had drifted off the sea, into one kind of vagabond life after another, until he was on the verge of starvation and crime in a great merciless city.

"Out in the night, that night, this lad stumbled against your friend Mr. Barton. He gave him shelter and food. Then he sent him out to Colorado before it was too late. Then—" Gordon was crying. The old lady had something in her sharp eyes that glittered brighter than the eyes.

"Then this lad discovered a secret. The Effinghams always were quick. He found out that he was not the only one. Mr. Gordon, do you know that this friend of yours has, during the last five years, sent a little colony of consumptive people to Colorado and paid all their expenses there, saving at least a dozen lives? This much my grandson has discovered. He was the first one of them to find out his benefactor's name and address. It first came to him through an accident. But your friend is—And you did not know it? I want to thank him. I want to tell him how much my boy owes him. You said he was ill. I trust it is nothing serious?"

John Gordon let the tears flow down his face. His friend's jealously guarded secret was out at last. Now he knew why he had so stubbornly refused to go to Colorado himself. He knew it was too late, and had always been. But knowing it,

he had put his own life aside, and had thus saved others. And it was too late for him now. The cynical, careless, great-hearted friend suddenly grew into an image that would always sit on the throne of his memory in the high place of honor.

"He is very ill? Tell me. Is it serious?" The old lady for the first time betrayed uneasiness.

John Gordon answered gently.

"He is very ill. He has consumption. He cannot live!"

"God bless him!" The old lady exclaimed. And her tears fell fast. After a while she said gently,

"Do you think I might see him? I would like to look on his face."

For answer John Gordon rose, parted the curtains and beckoned. The old lady followed and soon stood looking at the wasted face.

She stood a moment silently gazing, then she put out a hand, which Gordon had noted before, as astonishingly white and beautiful for such an aged person, and softly touched Barton's head. As she straightened up and stepped back, Gordon saw that she was much agitated. He offered her assistance to walk back into the hall. She accepted with an old fashioned acknowledgment of his politeness that touched him deeply.

When they were out in the hall she said,

"Will you tell him I came to see him?"

Gordon was thinking it over. Would Barton care to have his secret known?

"Yes, I will tell him."

"I think it will be better to let him know. Yes, it will

be better," the old lady said with approval. "The time will not be long. Will you write me when the end comes for him?"

"Yes, madam. I thank you for him, that you came."

"The pilgrimage is brief at the longest," she said with a strong gravity that was far from gloom. "But surely your friend has redeemed his time. I am glad I saw his face. Yes, glad."

Gordon offered to see her to the train but she firmly refused to be of any trouble to any one. "I am able to go alone. A carriage is waiting for me. Good night, sir, and God be with you.

"Good night, Madam," replied Gordon. Williams appeared and opened the door. Gordon insisted on seeing her down the steps and into the carriage. He had shut the door and the driver had just started his horse when the old lady stopped the driver with a word, her fine sharp-cut face looking out of the window.

"Tell your friend I will write. It will not be long before we shall meet."

The carriage went on, and Gordon walked up the steps and into the hall with a feeling that he had been dreaming. But the perfume of a cedar chest just opened after a long sea voyage lingered in the hall, and followed him into the rooms, as he thoughtfully went in again and took a look at Barton before resting.

In the morning when Gordon came out of his room he found Barton up and whistling.

He noted his friend's apparently improved condition.

"You had a caller last night after you fell asleep."

"That so? Some one from the office?" Barton asked carelessly.

"An old lady off an East Indiaman dated 1785."

"I'm too tired to guess. Explain."

"Here is her card." Gordon handed it to Barton.

"Mrs. Captain George Effingham, Salem," Barton read. Then his cheeks showed a color in addition to the unnatural glow there.

Gordon went up and put a hand on his arm.

"David! I know now why—why—"

"Say! you aren't going to cry, are you?"

"Cry! I've been crying all night. To think that you—"

"Well, why shouldn't I enjoy trips to Colorado, even if I can't personally conduct them? Tell me about the old lady. Effingham said his grandmother was going on a hundred. Sorry I missed seeing her. I expect she is a picture."

"A picture! She is a Romance. You would have fallen in love with her at once. She brought into the room the fragrance of cinnamon and cloves and spice from the islands of the sea. Don't you detect it now?"

"Smells to me like Williams' coffee," replied Barton sniffing critically. "But tell me about her."

Gordon described the visit as vividly as possible. When he had finished there was a suspicious moisture in Barton's eyes.

"She wanted me to tell you she would write."

"First love letter I'll ever get," sighed Barton whimsically. "I expect she's rich."

"No doubt. I can imagine the square old fashioned house she owns in Salem. Colonial front, fan window arrange-

ment over the doors and a staircase big enough to drive up a double team. But oh David! Why did you not go out there yourself before—”

“Before it was too late? No good. Case is chronic. Let’s change the subject. Tell me about Mr. Marsh.”

“But how many persons are you supporting in Colorado?”

“Don’t remember. Quit it or you will bring on my cough. It always get me when inconsiderate friends insist on talking about it.”

So Gordon took up the day’s experience with Mr. Marsh while Williams brought in the coffee and rolls, and Barton seemed unusually cheerful and funny. When Gordon rose to go Barton said,

“I think maybe I’ll get down to the office next week. But come up as often as you can, old man, won’t you?”

Gordon promised, with a choking in his throat as he shook hands, and went off carrying with him a memory that was both sad and inspiring. After he had gone out, David Barton went over to the couch and kneeling down sobbed like a child. He was a gifted man, only forty years old and life was very sweet to him.

The first thing John Gordon did on reaching Hope House was to confer with Miss Andrews.

“Do you think Mr. Marsh will do anything?” she asked.

“I think so, yes.” But Gordon’s reply was not very strong.

“You are in doubt. He was deeply impressed. But if I mistake not, he is the kind of a man to delay any move that means a real financial loss. His horror of the tenement

conditions is not equal to his dread of ultimate money loss if he tears the double decker down or remodels it."

"I'm afraid—yes," Gordon answered with a sigh.

"But of course," he said after a while, "you have used your influence with the Board of Health and the city officials and all other departments."

"Yes," Miss Andrews answered quietly.

"But conditions are getting worse. Why?"

"Ask Tommy Randall."

"The Political Boss?"

"Of course you know he is the rock on which most of our reforms split."

"I have never met him. Of course you have been to him personally?"

"Often. He's the most dangerous man in the city. He is utterly devoid of conscience. I have never found a single quality in him to which I could appeal. But if he would, he could move the powers that be, to right nearly every wrong in the ward."

Gordon was on the point of going on with the inquiries, for what he had heard of Tommy Randall the Boss, surrounded that potent force with a certain human fascination, but Miss Andrews was called away, and the talk was not renewed until they met again at dinner.

For a week John Gordon continued his special investigations with Ford, the University student. The work took him into another block. Coming back one evening from the district, he passed by No. 91 and the sight of an unusual commotion there caused him to stop and go in. He thought of his little friend, Louie, and reproached himself for not

having gone to see him or make inquiries. But the child was only one of hundreds for whom his heart was beginning to bleed, as the unending agony of childhood's tragedy in the tenements was beginning to be unfolded to him.

He went into the court and up the staircase and out upon the corridor. Several women there seemed agitated by some recent occurrences.

"What is it?" he asked of one of the women who was crying into a dirty apron.

"Louie's dead," she replied and resumed her crying.

John Gordon stepped to the door leading into Mrs. Caylor's. The mother met him there. Her face was hard and tearless.

"May I go in?" Gordon asked gently.

The woman made no reply and Gordon went on. The rooms were lighted with candles. Several women were in the room. A man was standing by a table on which was a rough pine coffin at which he was looking with disgust or contempt.

He looked up as Gordon came in.


"Who are you?" was the man's rough greeting.

"My name is John Gordon of Hope House!"

The man turned suddenly to one of the women who stood looking on submissively. "Take the thing out—" pointing to the coffin—"and tell Abrams to send up something better or he'll hear from me."

And this was John Gordon's introduction to Tommy Randall, the Political Boss of Hope House District, Ward 18.

CHAPTER. VI.

ORDON went back to the doorway where Mrs. Caylor was standing. She was tearless and apparently stolid.

"What arrangements have been made for a service, Mrs. Caylor?" Gordon asked, and his heart was sore at the sight of the wretched mother, whose tearless attitude touched him more than if she had shown a passion of grief.

"Mr. Randall is seeing to it," she said indifferently.

"But don't you want a minister?" Gordon was bewildered. He had never faced exactly the same situation.

"I don't care. Mr. Randall—"

"You are not a Catholic? I remember you said to me your people in New England belonged to the Baptist Church. There ought to be a service of some kind, with a minister. Do you know one you would like to have?"

"A minister?" the woman turned on him almost fiercely. "A minister! Mighty little use they have for such a one as me! This is no man's parish!"

"But for the sake of Louie! I can get Mr. Falmouth to come down. I am so sorry for you, Mrs. Caylor. God help you. Louie was a good boy."

The woman suddenly threw her apron over her head and burst into a torrent of weeping so violent that at first Gordon

was alarmed. He brought her a chair and made her sit down. The other women in the corridor came up and one of them said "She'll be all right now. When you can't cry that's the time your heart bleeds inside."

"What's all this racket?" cried a voice from the room. Gordon wheeled about and faced the man, Tommy Randall. With the instinctive forewarning of a peculiarly sensitive and delicate moral consciousness, Gordon knew that between this man and himself there could be nothing but war from the start. But what form it would take, what forces the man had to draw on, how much of a hold he had on the wretched lives that furnished his field of action, John Gordon did not know. Perhaps it was as well that he did not know much about it. A full knowledge of even one aspect of Tommy Randall's political influence might have appalled a more courageous and hopeful man than John Gordon.

The boss was a man of about forty-five. Outwardly he was a short, thick set man with a florid face and a resolute manner. He did not show any signs of intemperate living, and indeed it was his boast that he had no vices. The most noticeable characteristic of the man was his absolute confidence in his own influence. It was not egotism so much as a thorough faith in the political security of his position.

There was one quality that John Gordon possessed however, that made him formidable. He was fifteen years younger than this man, and he had practically no experience in that world which was the only world in existence for Tommy Randall. But he had a faith in God that was as profound as the other man's political creed, and in his love for the people he was prepared, in acting on that creed to go any

lengths that were within human possibility. If Gordon was ignorant of Tommy Randall's strength, the boss was no less ignorant of this young man's inner sources of persistent and tireless strength that would inevitably come to his assistance in the struggle that was beginning in that wretched tenement, with a child's death as witness to the grim contest.

"I have been asking Mrs. Caylor what arrangements have been made for a funeral service," Gordon spoke quietly. "If no other minister has been engaged I think I can get Mr. Falmouth of Nazareth Church to come down."

Tommy Randall walked up to John Gordon and deliberately looked him over. Gordon stood perfectly still, and never moved a muscle as his eyes looked straight into the older man's.

"The service has all been arranged, young man," Randall said finally. A sound of shuffling steps was heard on the broken stairs and along the corridor, and two men appeared with a coffin.

"Ah! There you are, Abrams! That's more like it. Don't try to palm off another one of your rotten boxes on me, or you'll hear from me, eh? Put it on the table." Then as two children came into the room at the heels of the two men who brought the coffin, Gordon was astonished to see Randall pat them on the head kindly and say, "Now then, lads, out of the road. I can't stop now."

The children went out of the room, and Randall hustled in and out ordering chairs and helping place the body of Louie in the coffin. Gordon came up to the table to look at

the little face, for Louie had been partly deformed, and his face was like a baby's.

He looked down at the figure and noticed that one hand was clenched tight. Stooping a little lower, by the dim light, Gordon recognized his own little gift when he had gone in with Mr. Marsh. It was a sample bottle of perfumery and the child had clung to it in the darkness, dying in the horrible filth of his surroundings, and as Gordon learned, some time afterwards literally covered with vermin.

John Gordon's tears fell on the face, as he felt that here was one of God's little ones against whom somebody had sinned. "Better for a millstone to be hanged around his neck—" he seemed to hear the words of the Son of Man, "than that one of these little ones should perish." Who was to blame? Was it the social system? Was it the selfish wealth? Was it political dishonesty? Was it a definite individual? This child—weak, deformed, helpless—did it not need the strength and beauty of a whole universe thrown about it in loving protection? Instead of that, flung like some vile thing among the rotting, loathsome, crawling things of the lowest physical world, it had gone out of a world of black horrors, clinging childishly to a bit of artificial fragrance that was practically all the touch it ever knew of the abounding perfume of a flower-bedecked earth. Poor little soul! Will not God take him and hold him long in His bosom of infinite pity? And will it be unjust if an impassable gulf yawns between him and the Dives who on earth tasted all the physical delights, but let the dogs lick the sores of the beggar at his gate, proud of his charity in flinging to him the crumbs of the feast? For is

not that about all that wealthy Christendom has so far flung at the dying beggar of the slum, after two thousand years of luxurious civilization?

His profound reverie was suddenly interrupted by Randall.

"Now then, young man, is there anything more?"

"The service?"

"The service! I will see to that."

"Is there any minister?" Gordon asked firmly, for he knew enough from what he had heard from the residents to know that in many cases there were no religious services of any kind, and a horrible haste and tumult that partook of the savagery of brute nature.

Tommy Randall paused before he answered, weighing somewhat carefully just how far he could go.

"What business is it of yours, young fellow?"

Gordon silently showed him his inspector's badge.

"Umph! Board of Health! Does the honorable body authorize you to manage funerals?"

"It does," replied Gordon boldly.

"How's that?" Randall asked sharply.

"The duties of tenement inspectors," Gordon went on calmly, "are clearly defined in section 12, article 4 of the Regulations of the State Board of Health. That article distinctly says it shall be the duty of the inspectors, in case of death occurring in districts under inspection, to notify the proper authorities and if no other authorized body is in charge, to arrange whatever is necessary for the welfare of the family in the matter of burial, &c. I consider therefore that I am acting fully within the limits of my authority,

when I say I have a right to call in a minister for the decent observance of the rites attending this death."

Tommy Randall was silent a moment. He was preparing a speech that would show this young man what a mistake he had made, when Gordon suddenly asked, with the simplicity that sprung from part ignorance of the power the boss really had.

"By what authority are you here in charge of this funeral?"

Tommy Randall gasped. For the first time in years he grew pale with rage, and at first Gordon thought the man was going to strike him.

"By what authority, you insolent puppy? I'll teach you by what authority! This is my ward, I'll have you understand. My ward, do you hear?"

"I hear you quite well, sir. You do not need to talk to make the dead hear!"

John Gordon spoke with a heart on fire as he realized with a gleam of instinctive loathing of the man, his diabolical hold on the people. "Come out here and say what you have to say. It is not decent for us to be having all this in the room."

He turned in a great heat of anger that instantly cooled as he went out on the corridor, and Randall followed him, in spite of himself as it seemed, and the curious gaping crowd, mostly women, thronged around to see the row between Tommy Randall the autocrat of ward 18, and the slim, pale faced, well dressed "gent" who had suddenly stepped into the arena alone against the whole political machine.

"He's up against it!" chuckled an old woman.

"Tommy will do him up brown," said a young man who loafed against the broken railing of the corridor and spit tobacco juice down on the heads of the children in the court below.

Gordon again was the first to speak. He was not aggressive, but perfectly firm and calm.

"Have you any legal authority for managing affairs here?" he asked, and Randall again made a movement which looked like a threat of physical violence.

"It is none of your business!" The sentence came out with an explosion of profundity that delighted the crowd.

"I am regularly appointed by the Board of Health as a legal officer. Do I understand that you are an officer of the city? Do you have a legal, official authority in these premises?" Gordon asked calmly. The question was so simply put that its very simplicity staggered Tommy Randall. He stared and then broke into a coarse laugh that was echoed by the women.

"Official authority be—I run this ward. I'm in charge here and I warn you to get out and leave this business to me."

"Do I understand you to threaten an officer with violence?" Gordon asked, looking him in the eye coldly. At the same time he took out a note book, while Randall eyed him in a rage that he was trying evidently to choke down. For the first time also, a trace of uneasiness mingled with his astonishment at the unexpected boldness of the young man who had thrown down the gauntlet before the boss of ward 18. He was beginning to be in doubt concerning the young man's political "pull." Nothing short of

secret influence at the City Hall could account for his astounding attitude.

"I warn you," Gordon talked as he jotted down something in the book and put it back into his pocket, "that I am acting fully within my authority as an officer specially detailed for this duty. I understand you make no claim to being an officer of the city. I shall proceed to secure a minister and have the services properly conducted. Mrs. Caylor is willing to have it done. Aren't you, Mrs. Caylor?"

"I don't care! Louie was a good boy, he was a good boy!" she cried, throwing her apron over her head and rocking back and forth with great sobs. During the talk she had been sitting by the door, apparently oblivious to everything. She now suddenly rose up and staggered into the room throwing her arms over the coffin and shrieking aloud "he was a good boy! Oh God! Oh God!"

Tommy Randall turned towards John Gordon with a look that was simply satanic.

"If you attempt to interfere or make any unusual disturbance, Mr. Randall," Gordon said again as he had twice before, taking the initiative. "I shall report you to the authorities."

The statement was so simply made, it covered so much absolute authority, that for a moment Tommy Randall stared in silence too much astonished to say a word. Then to Gordon's surprise and to the bewilderment of the crowd the older man put out his hand and said with a laugh,

"You're a good one! Report Tommy Randall! Give me your hand on it, young fellow! But you have the—say—Wouldn't he make a team with another one like him?"

Again the crowd laughed coarsely, and Gordon without seeming to notice the outstretched hand, turned his back on all of them and went into the room. Randall watched him with a snarl on his face that prophesied any number of accounts for the future. Then he grew thoughtful and before any one could guess his next movement he followed Gordon into the room.

Gordon had even in that brief time begun to soothe the distracted mother.

"I'll get my friend Mr. Falmouth to come down. He will have a beautiful service. He will—"

"Does Mr. Randall—"

The words were spoken with a frightened air that Gordon saw at once had some good reason. But before he could answer, Randall said good naturedly,

"I think we had better have the minister come down, Mrs. Caylor. That's all right."

"I'll arrange it," Gordon said briefly, as if Randall were not present. He did not care to puzzle himself at present over the man's change of manner. That it was a part of his regular policy to gain an end he knew well enough but he was indifferent to it. His very indifference was so complete that the boss felt again that uneasiness that had come to him already as a new experience; and again that same diabolical hate included John Gordon in its sweep of future reckoning; for Tommy Randall was beginning to feel dimly, but really, that for the first time in his political career, he was in the presence of a new factor. The newness of it puzzled and enraged him. It was so unknown that he could not figure on it. That made it doubly hateful to him.

John Gordon stayed a little longer and then went away. The hour fixed for the service was three o'clock. As he went out into the corridor and groped his way down the stairs and out into the court, he was plainly aware that curious faces stared at him and a little added respect was paid him.

"The old man fell down!" muttered the woman who had foretold Gordon's humiliation at the hands of the boss.

"Naw he didn't!" the tobacco user ejaculated with an oath. "Wait till the old man gets in his upper cut. He ain't downed by no 'gent'!"

Gordon at once took a car for Nazareth Avenue and within an hour he was in the Rev. Paul Falmouth's study, which was in the rear of Nazareth Avenue Church.

"Glad to see you, Gordon," Falmouth said as he rose and greeted his visitor cordially. The minister was a grave-faced man of thirty-five. The books, papers, pictures, and articles of interest in his study proclaimed a student if not a scholar. The man himself had a reserve power. How much more than that, was not apparent at first sight.

"I'm sorry to disturb your morning, Mr. Falmouth. I know your rule. But this is a case of death. I knew you would listen to me."

"Certainly, go on. I was thinking of you just a minute ago, and planning to come down to Hope House and see you. Of course I know what you have done. The papers—"

"Thank you, Mr. Falmouth, for your kind letter. It did me good. I'll be glad to see you at Hope House. But I know how busy you are!" Gordon glanced at the minister's desk, which was covered with open books, manuscripts in various degrees of preparation, and a miscellaneous heap of corres-

pondence which told the particular story of a laborious life.

"I'm always busy, Gordon." The words were spoken with a sigh that was instantly repressed. "But for more reasons than one, I want to see you and have a good long talk with you."

"I'll be very glad. But this is my errand this morning. I want you for a funeral service this afternoon."

He went on rapidly to relate the brief story of Louie, without reference to Randall or any of the occurrences that had brought him into the tragedy.

"I'll go, of course," Falmouth said instantly when Gordon paused. "Shall we have any singing? Have you any one in Hope House?"

"I had an idea as I came along up," Gordon spoke with a little hesitation. "If this was a funeral on Park Boulevard for a rich man's son, and you were called on to officiate, who would probably sing?"

"Why the Nazareth Avenue Quartette, I suppose. That is the arrangement made with them by the church music committee; that I am to have their services whenever I conduct a funeral. But—"

The Rev. Paul Falmouth paused. He saw at once the bearing of Gordon's question. Gordon watched him closely.

"Why not?" the minister said.

He rose and went into an adjoining room and rang a telephone bell. Gordon could hear him talking. When he came out he said simply,

"The quartette will join me here at two and we will go down together. I don't think any of them have been down

on Bowen street. But for that matter, neither have I. It won't hurt us any to see it."

"I don't know about that, sir. I'm of the opinion that it will hurt you. But isn't it about time that somebody, besides the people around Hope House, was hurt by what is going on there?"

The minister was silent. He understood fully all that Gordon implied by his remark. When he lifted his head Gordon had risen to go.

"Don't go, Gordon. That is, unless you have to. Why can't we have that talk now as well as any time?"

"We can unless you are too—"

"Busy? But it can wait. There's an article for the Homiletic Review. There's another for the North American. There are two sermons. An address before the Convention of Christian Citizenship. And a list of church duties that is never caught up with. But I question if any or all of it is as important as some of the things I want to discuss with you."

He paused and his grave face lighted up with a gleam of interest that transformed his scholarly appearance into something quite different. Gordon sat down again.

"What do you think of the church, Gordon? How much is it worth after all?"

The question surprised Gordon.

"I'm not a judge and don't want to be. I neglected my duties to the church and I am the last man in the world to criticise it."

Falmouth sat silent awhile.

"The church in this city is not doing its duty," he said

at last. "I sometimes question how much it is really obeying Christ's commands. When I consider the wealth, and business ability, and talent, and culture, in my own individual church alone, I cannot help asking myself how much of it is really consecrated to the uses of the Kingdom. I do not know six men in my own congregation who accept the doctrine of God's ownership of property, so plainly taught in the Bible and by Christ. When I preach on the subject, my people listen in a half amused manner, as if I were a theorist giving out ideas that will not work in the practical business world. There are not a dozen people in my whole parish, who give one-tenth of their income to the religious work of the world."

"How large is your church?" Gordon asked. He was growing exceedingly interested in Falmouth's monologue. For the minister had talked on as if alone.

"We have 976 names on the church roll. There are 72 absentees. Over 900 resident members. There are twenty-five men in the church worth over \$50,000, if their returns to the tax assessor are true. We raise for all church, missionary, and benevolent purposes, including my salary, which is \$2,500, the sum of \$13,000, annually. We pay a quartette choir \$2,000 a year. We pay an organist \$900. The flower committee paid \$1,700 last year for flowers and decorations in the church. At least a dozen women in the church spent \$500 apiece on flowers and decorations in their homes for receptions and parties and gave less than \$10 apiece to city missions. This sounds like a sordid and gossipy string of details, Gordon. But I am reminded of an extract from one of Starr King's essays.

“Over against every prominent allowance for a personal luxury, the celestial record book ought to show some entry in favor of the cause of goodness, and suffering humanity; for every guinea that goes into a theatre or museum, there ought to be some twin guinea pledged for a truth, or flying on some errand of mercy in a city so crowded with misery as this. Then we have a right to our amusements. Otherwise we have no right to them, but are liable every moment to impeachment in the court of righteousness and charity for our treachery to heaven and our race.’”

“Rather strong, eh? But not too strong when you consider that the earth is the Lord’s, the gold, the silver, the time, are all His. And when I look over my list of church members, and then read the society or business columns, which tell of their uses of money for luxury and amusement, is it any wonder that I ask, ‘Where is the Christian discipleship that gives so out of proportion to its own gratification, compared with its duty to great causes and social needs?’ Lowell’s verse haunts me—

“God bends from out the deep and says,
I gave thee of my seed to sow,
Bringest thou me hundred fold?
Can I look up with face aglow,
And answer, “Father, here is gold?”

“I am afraid the celestial record book will not show a very heavy deposit on the part of the luxury loving Christians of this day and generation.”

“Then do you consider that one of the indictments against the church of to-day?” Gordon asked, as Falmouth

raised his head and sorrowfully gazed at a picture of the crucifixion that hung over his desk.

"Yes, that and a lack of willingness to bear personal burdens, to carry crosses, to walk humbly, to apply Jesus' teaching to business, politics, and amusements. There is a striking inconsistency between the church members' vows and their daily lives, especially in the business and money making world. The Christians in our churches are not making their money as they ought, many of them, and they are not giving a tenth part as much as they ought, to help God's Kingdom."

"That is a sweeping charge, Mr. Falmouth. Yet you remain in the church and continue to preach and act under these conditions."

"I love the church," Falmouth spoke slowly, again sinking into reverie. "My father and his were ministers. My mother is a saint, if there ever were one, and her heart would almost break if she heard what I have said today, for she believes the church is God's leaven in a sinful world. So do I, but I see its need of regenerative cleansing so clearly, that I am torn between remaining where I am, to preach the truth from the inside, and going out to do my work apart from the church as an institution. Yet where shall I go? There are no other institutions that are more Christlike than the church. The labor orders are as selfish as the church. The organizations that do not profess any religious creed are no more hopeful places for a man to stand, than the place where I am now. I could lead a very quiet, easy life here if I were content to go softly in and out, preach sermons that would satisfy the intellectual or aesthetic demands of

my congregation and let these problems of humanity alone. But, Gordon—" He turned his face to his visitor and the intense passion of the man shone through the habitual gravity and culture that otherwise distinguished him, "I am, unhappily, shall I say? no, providentially, caught up in the social whirlwind of the age and I cannot, I cannot let these questions rest. Woe is me if I preach not a whole gospel. And in order to preach it, I must go the entire length of proclaiming Christ's Golden Rule and self-denying discipleship, knowing fully that my people will grow restless under it, knowing that they are not willing to take up the cross daily in order to follow their Master. And yet there is a faithful handful. There are some who have not bowed the knee to Mammon. Perhaps more than I have known. God forgive me if I have been unjust, or erred in my judgment of the church in this age."

Gordon did not venture to break the silence that followed. When Falmouth again raised his head, he said with a rare smile,

"I envy you, Gordon. I would almost like to change places with you. You seem to be doing work that needs to be done. You are doing things. I am writing about them. Some day—"

He stopped abruptly, and then asked,

"If you were in my place what course would you take with the moneyed business men in this church, to touch them with a sense of their responsibility and privilege as stewards of God's wealth?"

Gordon answered instantly.

"Get as many of them as possible to go down into Bowen street and see how the other half lives."

Falmouth's eyes gleamed.

"I doubt if they will go. I'll try it. I have never been there myself. But I see your point. You think the men and women of this city do not know the facts. You think a knowledge of the facts would touch them to do something?"

"Not necessarily. But the cultured, wealthy people in our churches as a rule know absolutely nothing, from personal knowledge, of the horrors of city life. They never go outside the little circle of the respectable, comfortable, and in many cases luxurious conditions into which they were born. I am convinced that if five hundred of the best business men in the churches of this city could see the things I have seen within the last two weeks, and know the facts that every resident in Hope House knows like the alphabet, the present awful wrongs would not be permitted in the city. The Christ method was personal familiarity with sinful conditions. He was a Savior because He himself knew the sinner. The weakness of the church lies in the fact that it has dropped out so largely the personal factor, and exists too much for its own religious life, in its elaborate church services which in so many cases have no other meaning than pride and vainglory of the participants. But I forget myself—" Gordon smiled sadly. "I am not fit to criticise the church. I who for so many years dishonored her with lip service and formal worship."

"You have as much right to criticise her as any Christian, if you do it in the right spirit," Falmouth said gently. Then he added, "Let us have a prayer together before

you go. We need to ask forgiveness for many things, and wisdom for everything."

So the two men kneeled while the minister prayed. It was a good, strong, sturdy prayer that did John Gordon good. There was no whining, no cant, no complaining. An honest heart plea for more strength, more toleration, more faith, more love, more patience. And Gordon, after a hearty handshake, went out and back to Hope House where he had agreed to meet Falmouth and the singers a little before three o'clock.

At three o'clock Bowen street was fully aware that something unusual was taking place. A "funeral" in Bowen street was as a rule an informal affair, in which the immediate neighbors were apathetically interested. But this affair of the deformed Louie Caylor promised unusual developments. Word had gone around that Tommy Randall had been temporarily "downed" in a "set to," with one of the gents from Hope House, but that before the funeral was over he would be on top of the pile, so to speak, and every body satisfied. So Bowen street poured into the court of No. 91 and choked the narrow stairways and back yards commanding a possible view of the funeral party.

When John Gordon, Falmouth, and the quartette turned into the court off the street, the amazement of the different members of the choir had given way to an expression of disgust mingled with actual fear.

"For pity's sake, Mr. Falmouth, where are you taking us!" exclaimed the tenor, a distinguished looking man, well-known in musical circles as a growing singer at fashionable receptions. The soprano, a young woman of some beauty,

and the alto, a little older but a woman of real strength of expression, drew closer together, as the miscellaneous crowd of Bowen street pressed nearer and the real horror of the place began to make itself felt. The gentleman who sang bass was with John Gordon and was looking at him with a look of intense indignation as if he were the real cause of bringing the party into the place.

"Do you wish to go back? You can if you wish," Falmouth said quietly.

"No, no—But this is horrible. It is past all belief. Is it safe for the ladies? Will they be able—"

"Perfectly safe, ladies," John Gordon spoke with a touch of grimness. "People are born and live and die here. Safe enough, I assure you."

He led the way promptly, asking the people to give them room. How the quartette ever lived to get up that stair case where Mr. Marsh nearly fainted, no one can tell except themselves. The soprano said afterwards that it was a miracle that any of them ever came out of it alive. And her indignation at the Rev. Paul Falmouth was so deep that nothing but financial considerations could induce her to sing in the Rev. Falmouth's church again.

The corridor in front of Mrs. Caylor's was packed almost solid with unwashed humanity, although everybody was dressed in the best garments he possessed. Tommy Randall was on hand as general manager. He was obsequious and even seemingly fawning to the Rev. Paul Falmouth. He spoke good-naturedly to Gordon, and gave everybody the impression that the whole arrangement was of his own planning. And in fact that night, when Gordon ran over all the inci-

dents of that remarkable day, he almost smiled to think that Tommy Randall had scored a triumph, with Louie's funeral as the background.

The quartette sat out on the corridor, and the minister stood in the doorway where he could be heard by the crowd in the rooms and outside. The three rooms were jammed with a promiscuous mob that was packed into every conceivable corner and left the undertaker and Tommy Randall merely room enough to squeeze themselves in close up by the coffin. Gordon was assigned a place by Mrs. Caylor. Out on the roofs that commanded a view of the minister and the singers a motley crowd of children, boys, young men, and old women, and babies was clustered in various degrees of more or less noisy interest, which quieted down to an intense stillness when the quartette rose to sing the first selection.

The singers had evidently made up their minds to make the best of a very bad situation. They were technically skillful, and from a variety of reasons, they sang with a power that probably astonished themselves. The unwonted surroundings, the very squalor and inhuman aspect of every repulsive physical thing, the staring white faces that grow up in tenement atmosphere, until they become types that can be fitted on to any other tenement-house-grown person, all this acted with a definite measure of excitement upon the quartette, and as a matter of fact, Rev. Paul Falmouth said to himself he had never heard them sing with more expression or real feeling on any occasion.

When the song ceased a sigh went up through the rooms and out on the roofs a movement could be heard that was

like applause. Falmouth stood up and began to talk. He was not at all afraid or seemingly conscious of his unusual situation. He talked of eternal life, how it began, what it was worth, how it could be distinguished from physical life.

The people understood him. Mrs. Caylor, who had sobbed all through the singing, was perfectly quiet while Falmouth talked, and afterward, when he prayed for her and for all mothers who had lost children.

Then the quartette sang again. When they ended there was unmistakable applause from the roofs. The soprano turned red, the alto looked confused, the tenor scowled, and the bass seemed uncertain whether to smile or frown.

Gordon came to the rescue by rising and helping Mrs. Caylor as she took a last look at the poor figure in the coffin. She shrieked and flung up her arms until the undertaker somewhat roughly, but as Gordon knew afterwards with no real intention of being so, thrust the sliding cover of the coffin up in its groove, covering the body from sight. Tommy Randall took one end of the coffin, the undertaker took the other end, and the brief procession made its way unceremoniously out of the room and down to the wagon which was in waiting on Bowen street.

Falmouth went in and spoke a few words of comfort to the mother, who seemed, now that it was all over, to have resigned herself to her usual apathy. When the minister came out, Gordon and the singers were grouped together watching the crowd disperse from the roofs and back staircases, so as to get out on the street and see the coffin loaded into the wagon.

"This is horrible! horrible! Let us get out as soon as

possible!" the soprano murmured. She was holding a fine, scented handkerchief to her face. The smoke from the chimneys of the house below was drifting in heavy masses up through the corridor and into the rooms of all the apartments that opened on it as the only outlet.

"First time I ever heard applause at a funeral," the tenor muttered, speaking partly to Gordon. Gordon looked at the singer quietly and simply said, "How many of the people ever heard first class music? Did you ever think there is more than one kind of hunger?"

They all went down the stairway together as they had come up, Gordon as before leading the way. Going down, the alto said, "But this is simply awful. How can human beings live in such places?"

"They don't all live," Gordon said exactly as he had said to Mr. Marsh. "Be careful of that step. The stairs are unusually clean to-day. I think Mr. Randall is responsible for that. I never saw the corridor so clean as it was to-day."

"Clean," the soprano gasped. "I shall never be able to wear this dress again. This is the most fearfully awful place I was ever in."

Gordon did not say anything until they were all down and out of the court into Bowen street again. Then he turned to the soprano.

"Would you and the rest of the quartette be willing to come down to Hope House some time this fall and take part in a free concert given in the new hall?"

"I—I—don't know," the soprano looked doubtfully at the other singers.

"I think I could come," the alto said a little hesitatingly.

"Don't believe I could manage. Haven't time." The tenor answered shortly.

Gordon shut up like a new knife and did not say another word, until the party was back at Hope House. When they went out to get the car that went by at the next block, Falmouth said to Gordon, "Don't get discouraged. But oh, my God, what human misery, Gordon, you social settlement people always have to look at. It seems to me the sight would drive you mad after awhile. The utter hopelessness of it is enough to kill the heart of a giant."

"God is not dead," Gordon answered. He shook hands all around and thanked Falmouth and the singers, feeling a little ashamed of his curt silence at the tenor's refusal to accept his invitation. Falmouth promised to come down soon and take tea at Hope House and parted with Gordon under the impression that the afternoon's experience had brought them some closer together.

How little any one of us reckons on the changes that come into all our plans by the accidents of life. And yet how many great events owe their greatness to apparent trifles that are called accidents, for want of a better name.

Gordon had gone up to see David Barton that same evening. Barton had greeted him cheerfully and again astonished him by his appearance. They had lingered long over their evening talk, and Gordon had interested Barton tremendously in his account of the meeting with Tommy Randall.

"You scored on him," Barton chuckled.

"I don't know. He is deep, in certain directions. But I will know the secret of his hold. In fact I think I have

it already. He will never best me." Gordon answered firmly, but modestly.

They sat on, postponing bed time until the clocks struck twelve.

"Time to put the cough on the shelf," Barton said. He had not had a spell all the evening, to Gordon's relief.

Gordon went into his room, which had windows commanding a view of the lower part of the city.

He came back instantly and called to Barton,

"Come here! Look! Isn't that a fire! Over near the end of Bowen street, Waterside District?"

"Right you are!" Barton exclaimed quickly. "The Moss street cars will take us within a block. Let's go."

"David, you ought not to risk—"

"Risk nothing! What's a day or two more or less! Come!"

Gordon put on his hat. Barton threw on a light overcoat, though the evening was not cold, and they went down as fast as possible. As they passed out into the Boulevard and ran over to the next corner to get the first car, a fine mist swept into their faces. Before the car came, the mist had changed to a drizzling rain and a breeze had sprung up.

"You ought not to have come," Gordon said again.

"Don't give me away to my cough. Let's fool it as long as possible," Barton said with a grin.

They left the car where it crossed Bowen street and ran down towards the place. People were running in from all the side streets.

"It's No. 91, Mr. Marsh's double decker!" Gordon panted as they drew nearer.

Barton did not answer. He was breathing painfully, but

did not slacken his pace. In college he had been the prize winner for the half mile.

The department had stretched a cordon across the street but the mob disregarded it. Flames were pouring out of the basement windows of No. 91 where the bakery was. The wind was rising.

"See there!" cried Barton suddenly. He pointed to the upper story of the double decker. A child had come to the window. She held out a younger child in her arms. For a second she stood there in plain view of the crowd in the street, then she disappeared. In another moment she came to the window again.

"Look! Look!" A hundred voices called out. Up through the central air shaft sixty feet above the court a tongue of flame leaped. The next instant out of every window except the row fronting on the street, with a rush and a roar the fire broke, rattling the glass to the ground and licking the whole structure around with hungry, greedy, long anticipated delight.

The child with her burden of the younger child again appeared at one of the top windows. The crowd roared. A wagon tore around the corner. Ladders rattled as they were pulled out.

"They will be too late. They can't save her!" Barton groaned. The whole street was now bright as noon. The child did not cry. She stood there, her pale face looking down, her arms clasping the little figure tighter to her body.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ladders went up quickly, but to the breathless crowd that now blackened every house top, and choked Bowen street with a mass of upturned white faces touched with the glow of fire, it seemed as if the company was unusually slow. Before the ladders had reached a perpendicular, before they had trembled, swaying over towards the building, a dozen faces appeared at the upper windows beside the child with her charge, beckoning frantically for help.

"See! See there!" Barton cried again, with the same nervous tension which he had shown since leaving his rooms.

A figure leaped out of the upper window, whirled over twice, striking the upper extension of the ladders, and fell into the street. The crowd groaned. A second figure stood out on a window sill, and throwing up its arms with a shrill cry more beastly than human, flung itself out toward the ladders now leaning over toward the building. It was a woman. She actually touched one of the ladder rounds with her fingers and for a second the crowd thought she had grasped it, but for only a second. The body shot downward and Barton and Gordon closed their eyes, and involuntarily put their hands up over their ears, to shut out the horrible sound. Again the crowd groaned and a wild beast yell arose.

"The life blanket!" someone shrieked, and it was only after the whole thing was history, that Bowen street learned that owing to the narrow courts and the broken pavements the department was fatally hindered in all its movements, and the wagon carrying the life blanket had overturned at a corner killing the driver and maiming one of the horses so that it had to be shot. Make out another indictment for murder, against a municipality which deliberately robs the people of its rights, in order to keep the wheels of the political machine moving. What are human lives compared with the spoils of office, and the plunder that is a part of political service to the powers that be?

The ladder fell over and touched the window sill, where the child of the tenements was standing with her burden, and then a scene occurred that will never leave John Gordon as long as he toils on bearing human woes on his brave and bleeding heart.

The child suddenly disappeared and in her place could be seen two men and a woman, fighting like wild beasts for the first chance at the ladder which rested on the sill. A fireman was climbing up, and had almost reached the mad-dened fighters. At the other windows wild, imploring faces begged in agony for life. Two more forms were seen to jump from the windows at the corner farthest from the ladder. The fire was now bursting through the roof, and one group from the window next the fighters above the ladder fell back as if a floor had given way—all this in the few seconds it took to be burned into Gordon with awful detail, when he saw the ladder rise to a perpendicular as if some giant hand had pushed it back. It rose until it

stood straight, the solitary figure of the fireman silhouetted against the blazing wall, and then the entire front of the house, with a roar that gathered volume in a sickening rush of death, fell over into the street, burying in one mingled mass the fireman who had been standing on the ladder, his companion at the foot, and the crowd in the street that, caught in a trap, could not escape even if there had been time to give warning of the danger.

For one awful second Gordon and Barton, who had been standing just outside the reach of the falling wall, looked into the blazing interior of the tenement. Figures within that roaring furnace leaped down into it from floors and window ledges. Others jumped into the street. They looked like great insects leaping into jets of flame. Then with a deafening crash the remaining side walls fell inward. The rear wall remained standing for a minute, then swayed and crashed backward, upon the lower buildings behind, where at once fire broke out in a dozen places. To the friends it seemed as if the air suddenly filled with groans, with appeals, with cries that were like curses, like wails of spirits that had been denied all earthly happiness and by the greed of selfish man had now been consigned to endless torments in the other world, there to be subject to the furies' rage, to the ceaseless suffering that earth had begun, and hell existed to perpetuate.

And oh, for you, little child of the tenements! Nameless heroine, crushed into shapeless form of horror, still faithful to your charge, both going down together into that grave of fire, who shall deliver your eulogy, who shall rear your monument? For one among those who leaped into the

street lived long enough to tell your story, and to say that you ran back into the burning building to warn sleeping inmates, and then was snatched away from the window, from the only place of possible rescue, by the very men and women wakened out of suffocating death. If there is a reward or compensation in the world beyond, the good God has surely folded you and your little charge into His infinite pity and carried you into the vale of pleasure, into the paradise of childhood's play ground that eternity will provide. For you never knew what play meant here.

As the rear wall fell, crushing in the roofs of the smaller houses near, and spreading the fire into the adjoining blocks, David Barton gripped John Gordon's arm tight and exclaimed, "The wind is changing! Hope House will go next!"

They were on the corner next to Hope House and the horror of the whole situation was suddenly intensified if possible, by the danger which now threatened the one building in the whole ward that represented humanity at its best. The wind had changed to the east. The rain was increasing. It came down in a steady cold, that had no effect on the fire except apparently to increase its fury. The awful confusion was increasing every moment. The alarm had been sent in for the entire department. In almost a second's time the mass of low wooden tenements that stood crowded together on both sides of Hope House was bursting with fire. The maddened, panic-smitten people were carrying their goods out into the streets. Under the shapeless mass of hot bricks and twisted iron beams in Bowen street human forms could be seen, here a face staring up, here a hand, a foot, a trunk of formless horror. The whole pile seemed a writh-

ing, tangled heap of human agony. Groans and cries burst from it that were appalling. The mass had fallen so near to the two men that some of the bricks lay at their feet. Before either realized what he was doing they were both digging at the ghastly mound, Hope House forgotten for the time being. Their hands were burned and torn by the hot bricks and splintered beams. Barton especially seemed inspired with unusual strength. He was drenched to the skin. His light overcoat was soon a mass of tattered rags. He was lifting a beam that lay across a figure that had moved a hand thrust out of the debris. Gordon was helping him.

"It's Mrs. Caylor!" Gordon exclaimed as the face of the figure appeared.

The woman was crushed in a sickening physical mass, but she was alive and conscious.

"It's Mr. Gordon! Mrs. Caylor!" said John with a sob. as he tenderly wiped the face and with Barton's help, lifted off the beam that had crushed her.

The woman gasped and spoke feebly but clearly.

"Do you think I'll see Louie? He was a good boy. A good boy."

"Yes, yes, Mrs. Caylor. And his body's straight now, and he's out of pain."

"A good boy. Yes, out of pain now," she murmured. Gordon and Barton lifted the form and carried it over to Hope House entrance. There were no need of words. No other place was possible. As yet the fire had not touched it. The crowd that surged through Bowen street had suddenly left everything else unsaved, to protect Hope House. Miss Andrews was out by that tangled heap of torture and death,

digging with her hands at the monstrous pile, working with a man's energy, and shaming more than one man by her calm but determined courage.

But Hope House had suddenly come to mean more in a few seconds than it had meant in a dozen years to the people. That silent, pale, resolute, awfully patient woman who had been loving them resistlessly all these years, who was now over there digging at the living graves of the people, what of the place called her home, the center of her benignant influence? It should not perish. The people of Bowen street surrounded the place and fought death for a grim hour, aided by reinforcements of the Department. In almost a dream of action Barton and Gordon had participated in this wild fury of defense. They first carried the body of Mrs. Caylor into the hall. As they laid it down, both knew that what they laid down was a lifeless, shapeless heap of bones and flesh. She was with Louie now,

“On the other side of Jordan,
In the sweet fields of Eden
Where the tree of life is blooming.”

The men rushed out to the defense, and in that next hour Waterside District witnessed as heroic a struggle as any age of chivalry ever boasted. It was not an occasion for the Department to dictate any rules or methods of procedure. The people made rules. They tore down buildings, flung themselves upon flaming fragments, stamped under foot and literally beat back the fury of the encircling fire. And Hope House was saved. When it was all over, the building stood blackened, defaced, scorched, but intact, and into its arch-

way came streaming a dark procession of forms bearing dreadful burdens, which were laid in straight rows through the hall and on the library floor. Before the grey dawn broke through the pall of smoke dripping with a drizzling air that penetrated even the warmly dressed early risers on the boulevards, there were more than forty-seven forms lying side by side on the floor of Hope House, and under the ghastly mound how many more no man dared to guess.

John Gordon found Miss Andrews still at work out by the ruins.

"You must stop and eat something," he said gently, but firmly. And as he spoke he laid his hand on her arm.

She was bearing on her face and person the marks of her desperate energy. But she had never ceased to be Grace Andrews, calm, self poised, patient, indomitable, but never hysterical or nervous.

A faint color appeared in her face, and she let Gordon bring her something to eat. She tasted it sitting on a beam near the ruins. The firemen, who knew her, never thought of refusing her a place with the workers. Through the dawn up into the increasing light of the awful day that revealed new horrors, she worked on, and Gordon and Barton silently worked beside her.

The great excitement had kept Barton nerved up to the occasion. As the dawn broke, however, the strain was too severe for the frail tenement. He felt something snap somewhere and his eyes blinded as he staggered over the ruins. He brushed back his hair that hung matted and dripping over his forehead, and tried to steady himself. There was a child's arm protruding from a mass of plaster

and bricks at which he had been working as in a nightmare, sobbing and coughing, and alternately cursing and praying. Gordon was several feet away, lifting a beam with Miss Andrews.

He straightened up and saw it all in a mist that darkened swiftly. Again he brushed his hand over his forehead and tried by all the exercise of his will to keep from falling, but the next moment he reeled, stumbled against a projecting timber, and fell, face downward. The fingers of the child which had been moving slightly touched his warm cheek. When John Gordon came over to lift Barton up, the child's arm encircled Barton's neck.

Gordon gently unclasped the arm and lifting up his friend carried him into Hope House. As he laid him down, Barton opened his eyes and whispered, "Never mind me, save the others."

Gordon kneeled and kissed Barton's forehead and leaving him in charge of one of the residents, he went out to the work. When he and Miss Andrews had dug out the child it had breathed its last. Miss Andrews kissed the disfigured face, and the first tear that Gordon had ever seen her shed fell on the body.

"One of our children in the Kindergarten. O my God! For this slaughter of the innocents who shall be counted guilty?"

She carried the child into the house, and when she came back there was an added divinity of righteous indignation in her blue eyes, added sadness in the lines of her patient face.

Day broke on Waterside District, Ward 18, over a scene that had never before been witnessed in any part of the city. There had been very many fires before this horror of tenement house fire, Ward 18. But no disaster had ever before

been marked by such sickening slaughter of children. In number 91, Mr. Marsh's double decker, twenty-nine children were burned or crushed to death. In the other blocks, twenty-three more were victims of the falling wall or the night's exposure. Seventy-five families were instantly beggared, saving only the clothes they wore, and left without a roof to shelter or a cent to pay for bread. Great piles of valueless furniture and bedding filled the streets and alleys, soaked by the rain which continued all day. Hope House stood solitary and alone, choked with the dead and the living among whom Miss Andrews moved with an angel's pity, and a commander's firmness. She was perfectly self-possessed and knew just what to do next. Under her leadership order grew out of awful confusion, and Hope House transferred into a hospital knew at once that she who had been the gracious head of the settlement was also its director, under the shadow of this fearful calamity.

Barton had been carried into one of the resident's rooms. When Gordon came in to see him, after he had yielded to reinforcements sent in by the Department, Barton was lying so pale and still that Gordon feared the end had come, but the great eyes opened in a moment and Barton whispered,

"Take me up to my rooms, John. Williams is used to caring for me, and I am in the way here."

"In the way! Miss Andrews," Gordon spoke to her as she appeared at the door of the room, "is my friend Mr. Barton in the way here?"

"In the way! I feared you had passed on, Mr. Barton, when I saw you carried into the house by Mr. Gordon. You are not able to be moved. The exposure—"

"The exposure did me good!" Barton interrupted almost roughly. "Send for a carriage, John. I can go easy enough. I fainted out there. I'm not used to night work. They saved Hope House, Miss Andrews?"

"Yes, thank God," she said softly. Even with all the horrors of that night, and the awful sight out in the hall and library, she felt a thrill at the thought that the people had loved her a little.

Gordon did not remonstrate. Under other circumstances he might have done so. When he had first entered the room he had partly closed the doors, but the groans, the shrieks for mercy, the wails of friends discovering relatives in the piles of crushed humanity out on the floor, had swept into the room and Barton had shrunk down in the bed and shuddered. Gordon went out; closed the door, and ordered a carriage for Barton. When it came he went to help Barton get ready. To his amazement, he was up and waiting. When he got up off the bed on which he was sitting, he reeled on his feet and would have fallen if Gordon had not put an arm about him.

"You are not able to leave!"

"I am, I tell you! I will never die here. I'll live long enough to get to my rooms. And I'll live long enough to write up this horror too. The day of Judgment ought to begin to-day, for some of the people in this God-forsaken metropolis, John. There's your friend Mr. Marsh? I sup-

pose the building was insured. He never lost anything, eh? Not that sort!"

Gordon supported him through the hall, and Barton in spite of his tremendous will power nearly fainted at the sights and sounds there. Miss Andrews was helping one of the surgeons. A great crowd thronged the entrance to Hope House and Gordon had great difficulty in getting Barton out to the carriage.

He put him into it and was stepping in himself when Barton pulled the door and told the driver to go on.

Gordon hesitated.

"You're needed here. Go on, driver! I'll promise to live till to-morrow, John. Go in and help her. She needs some one."

The carriage started slowly on account of the crowd. Gordon waved a silent good-bye. When the carriage was out of Bowen street, Barton fainted. He lay like a dead man in the corner of the carriage and when the driver reached his rooms and got down to open the door he was frightened at the sight of what looked like a corpse in the carriage. He and Williams carried Barton in and before noon Barton lay in a tremendous fever which the doctor said was a clear case of pneumonia.

"Can't save him!" the doctor said to Williams curtly. I'll send up the best nurse we've got. But Barton might as well shoot himself as do what he did last night."

Down at Hope House all day, John Gordon, Grace Andrews, the assistants, and a score of surgeons worked to save life, with heart breaking doubt in their souls as they labored, as to the future fate of the mangled, crushed, burned,

maimed humanity that did not mercifully die. In the feverish horror of it all, as the work of searching the ruins went on, and dense throngs of curiosity seekers choked all the district, John Gordon was aware of one prominent figure that was apparently omnipresent, Tommy Randall. He was on hand, cheerfully encouraging those who had lost everything, securing temporary quarters for those who were wandering bewildered through the streets, or sitting dumb and stolid on their damaged piles of household goods, distributing wagon loads of bread and coffee, and in several cases hunting up lost children, and bringing together families that had become separated during the confusion. Once as he stepped out of the hall for a moment to get a breath of fresh air, Gordon almost ran into Randall, who had one child by the hand and another in his arms, both of them devouring sandwiches. Randall nodded to Gordon but did not speak, and Gordon stepped back without saying anything. But all the rest of the day he had a vision of Tommy Randall and those children.

Both morning and evening papers contained full accounts of the "Tenement fire horror on Bowen street." The News printed a list of names of property owners, and Philo H. Marsh's name was prominent among them as owner of the "double decker fire-trap" as it was labeled. Every paper in the city had an editorial on the subject, but only one of them—The Index—called attention to the fact that for years the nature of the construction had been fully known and nothing done because city politics did not wish to interfere with property owners who paid a certain amount of blackmail, for the privilege of ignoring city ordinances. A special meeting of the city council called to consider the condition of the peo-

ple in the ruined district, took action to provide temporary quarters for the homeless. Meanwhile, public indignation cooled almost as fast as the ruins in Bowen street, when it was rumored that several prominent men and women had subscribed several thousand dollars to the survivors, and that as one result of the fire, a set of model tenement buildings would be built in the burned district. John Gordon reading all this in moments when he rested from the great strain that continued for many days, could not repress a strong feeling that nothing but Christian grace kept from being bitter hatred of class, that the real cause of all the horror had not been touched by all the editors and all the public excitement. The landlords were not arrested for anarchy in breaking ordinances, which if obeyed would have made the massacre of children impossible. The professional politicians and spoilsmen continued to hold their places and plan for future plunder of the people. Tommy Randall, Boss of Ward 18, was winning golden opinions from the sufferers by his lavish distribution of food and clothing and shelter. The disaster was a God-send to Tommy. How should the poor, ignorant, stolid people of Bowen street know that the bread and coffee and beer and clothing and coffins that Tommy Randall distributed with such cheerfulness and good will, were bought with money which men like Mr. Marsh and Mr. Rufus Gordon had paid as part price for being let alone in their business methods?

How should the people know that Tommy Randall "touched" the pocket of every saloonkeeper and every keeper of a disreputable house and every prominent criminal in Waterside district to get the sinews of political war? And what difference if he did, as Miss Andrews had so often told them?

Wherever the money came from, it bought the things the people needed, and Tommy was the best friend they had. Flowers at christenings, turkeys during the holidays, jobs on the street force, a stand-in with the city hall—why even Miss Andrews and Hope House had no such gifts for the people. To be sure Hope House was a good thing, and Miss Andrews was all right, but Tommy Randall was the people's friend, and "we'll never go back on Tommy," was the settled conviction of every man in the ward who owed his job to Tommy. Surely, O Boss of Ward 18, you understand your business as well as if you were an angel of light. "Hats off to the ward Boss," says the devil, as his best agents in corrupting the modern city file by in the great Human Review of the American city. The republic may have a president, but the municipality supports a king.

When Gordon went up to see Barton at the end of the most harrowing day he had ever known, he found his friend raving with fever. He did not know Gordon. The nurse was in charge with Williams, and all Gordon could do was to drop a tear on Barton's face as he kissed the burning forehead and exact a solemn promise from Williams to send for him at once whenever the end was near. Then back again to three days' experiences that aged him but brought out all his reserve force, and he had a vast quantity of it.

Two events in those three days stand out sharp and distinct in the life of John Gordon.

The first event was his deepening acquaintance with Grace Andrews. Working together side by side during those three days, they rapidly grew to respect and have confidence in each other. Grace Andrews amazed Gordon by her courage, her

infinite patience, her profound pity for suffering, her endurance, under circumstances so terrible that more than one of the men residents in the house fainted away at the sight of some of the bodies taken from the ruins. In several instances Gordon felt confident that Miss Andrews loved the dying back into life. She moved among them like an angel of God. At the most painful examinations, at the most critical operations, she was present, a benediction and a peace. More than once during those days, Gordon found himself thinking of Grace Andrews in a way he had never yet thought. He had never given her credit for a sweet hearted tenderness, fascinating in its disclosure of an absolutely pure and gentle nature, feeling for all the woes of life. He had always admired her steadiness of purpose, her unterrified patience, her deep seriousness of motive. But he had never before witnessed her womanly sentiment, brought into prominence by this sudden stroke of suffering. It all added to the definition he was making of her. It all enriched his faith in her purpose and her sacrifices. In all this there was not a hint of anything sentimental on his own part. The awfulness of all those surroundings during that memorable week, would have made any such thought impossible even if he had been other than he was, the farthest possible removed from susceptibility. The one impression that he received from a nearer view of her character, was a conviction that she was a woman who had rare capability for loving and being loved, and he even went so far in his thinking, as a result of this impression, that he tried to imagine the character of the man who might possibly win such a great and affectionate nature.

The other event was an unexpected interview with Luella

Marsh. The Rev. Paul Falmouth had come down to see Gordon and offer help of various kinds to Miss Andrews from his church young people's society. As he was getting ready to leave, he said to Gordon, "It seems to me now is the time for Miss Andrews and you to bring pressure to bear on Mr. Marsh. While the horror is still keen, and public sentiment is favorable, you ought to persuade him to do something. He will probably rebuild? Do you know?"

"I don't know anything about it. Why has he not been down here?"

"Gordon," Falmouth spoke with quiet earnestness. "Do you know Mr. Marsh intimately? I understand your relation to the family. I believe I know his characteristics better than you do. At least I know this. He is morbidly sensitive in the matter of viewing human suffering. Do you suppose—"

Gordon's face darkened. Was it possible that any man would run away from duty like this? All his respect for Marsh, his feeling for him as the father of Luella were at once swept away by the thought of the man's contemptible cowardice. A tremendous tide of indignation took possession of him as he recalled Marsh's pitiable action at the time he visited the tenement. Would he deliberately shirk his responsibility in the matter of the fire and the opportunity now offered him to rebuild?

"I'll go and see him, if you say so," Falmouth volunteered as he went away.

"I wish you would," Gordon replied. And he added in a tone that spoke of a personal passion that was nearer anger than any feeling he ever experienced, "If he doesn't come

down here before night, I mean to go and see him myself. I want to know from his own lips the cause of his absence."

The day went by and Mr. Marsh did not appear. That evening Gordon told Miss Andrews his intention. She made no comment of any kind. Gordon waited a moment, and then asked a question.

"How far is Mr. Marsh responsible for all this suffering, for these deaths?"

"God will judge him, not I," she answered, her blue eyes filled with a light that more than once during the week, Gordon had noticed as peculiar to her.

"I want to say the right thing to him. But I am afraid I shall lose my judgment in the matter," he said as he hesitated. Miss Andrews did not offer any suggestion and Gordon at once went out and took the first car that made connections with up-town lines.

It was not until he stood on the familiar steps that he realized in some degree what he was about to do. The chance of meeting Luella was so small that he had not given it any thought. He had not seen her since his interview with her. And while he was heart hungry for the kind of love that was being denied him, the experiences through which he had been, since going to Hope House, the appalling character of the disaster for which Luella's father was at least in large part responsible, for the time being obscured his personal affairs. It can truly be said that as he gave his name to the servant and asked to see Mr. Marsh he was nerving himself for the interview, with Luella in second place at least.

He went into the hall reception room and had only just sat down when Luella entered. He rose and faced her and

saw at once that some mistake had been made by the servant. Luella was deeply agitated. She was hardly able to say,

"I was told a visitor wished to see me—"

"I called to see Mr. Marsh," said Gordon quietly. But his pulses were beating high.

For a moment they stood looking at each other and each noted something even under the stress of the situation.

John saw that the proud attitude was marked by a sadness that had left its mark on a beautiful face so clearly, that he said to himself, "She loves me still!" Luella noted in her former lover an added dignity and nobility, and said to herself, "He is a man; not a store model like Penrose!" And there were two hearts beating high in the short silence.

"Father is not at home. He is out of the city," she managed to say, but her lips trembled in spite of all her efforts.

Gordon took a step towards the hall.

"May I ask when he went away?"

"I believe he left three days ago."

"The morning after the fire around Hope House."

"Yes."

There was another silence. Gordon's mind went into a tumult.

"May I ask when he expects to return?"

"I think to-morrow or the next day." She was recovering her equanimity but she resented his questions.

"Will you kindly ask him to come down to Hope House and see me on a matter of business when he returns?"

"Will you state the business?" she put the question as coldly as he had put his.

"Certainly!" Passion had the reins now and was lashing

him hard. "Please tell your father I want to ask him how far he considers himself responsible for the murder of over sixty children and the maiming of a score more on account of the illegal tenement he constructed on Bowen street!" It was the severest thing he had ever said to Luella, but his excuse was found in the agony that filled Hope House at that minute.

"Murder, did you say?" Luella's eyes blazed, she stepped towards John Gordon and confronted him defiantly. "Do you realize what you are saying?"

"Do I? Oh, Luella, if you had seen what I have seen during the last three days—" Gordon broke down so suddenly that Luella was overwhelmingly embarrassed. It was no secret with her heart that the man had her love, at least she was wretched without him, even if she was not yet willing to live with him where he chose to live. To see him sitting there, now, with his face covered, smote her proud nature so hard that in a moment she would have been kneeling beside him and promising to go with him anywhere, to leave every social pleasure she prized, for the love of his heart.

But how should John Gordon know anything of all that? When he looked up he saw her standing very still and very white, staring at him in a questioning way. And in an almost matter of fact tone, he began to relate the facts about Mr. Marsh's relation to the disaster. He told the facts in quite a dispassionate manner. In reality he was exercising a great repression. And he noticed, as he drew near the end, that Luella was listening like one who was being told certain things for the first time.



"If It is Horrible to Look at, What do You Think It is to Feel It?" (See page 16.)

"I never knew that father owned any property on Bowen street," she said in a low voice when Gordon stopped.

John Gordon rose. His heart was sore over everything connected with Mr. Marsh's conduct. He had not a single excuse to offer for him.

"Do you believe me?" Luella cried with her old spirit flaming up.

"I have no reason to disbelieve you. You are not to blame for your father's guilt."

"It is a great grief to me," she said simply. "Over sixty children! I could not read the details of the—the—disaster. Father took the paper out of my hands that morning. It made me sick and—and—you know how sensitive father has always been at the sight of suffering. He could not bear to hear of it or look at it. I am made in the same way. It is all too horrible."

"If it is horrible to look at, what do you think it is to feel it?" John Gordon asked grimly. And as he asked the question, Grace Andrews' face with its tender, deep blue eyes, flashed up before him and for the first time in his life he compared her with Luella, simply in the matter of capability to bear the sins and sorrows of humanity.

Luella looked at him gravely and shook her head. And then John Gordon rose.

"You are not going?" she said before she realized. And then the color flooded her face and she stood, proud woman as she was, with bowed head, as conscious as a girl who has made some little social mistake.

Again if John Gordon had said, "Luella! I will never go from you if you will ask me to remain!" she would have given

her whole life into his keeping and followed him to the earth's end for the love of him. But how was he to know all that? All he saw was a woman who quickly recovered from a momentary confusion and he said, "You must excuse me. I came to see your father. I am very anxious to see him and shall be under obligations to you, if he can come down to Hope House as soon as he returns."

He turned and walked out into the hall, where he turned again towards her and gravely bowed.

"Good evening," he said coldly. He said it coldly, because his heart was beating so fiercely that he was afraid to betray his emotions. She did not say a word, only looked at him as he slowly walked to the door. As he opened it she said in a whisper "John!"

He never heard. Is love then both blind and deaf? Yea, it is sometimes, when the lovers are both high spirited, strongly individual and sensitive. And alas for John Gordon, he neither saw nor heard and walked out into the night, wretched at heart and cast down in his emotions. When he was gone, Luella laid her head again on her arms, and when Mr. Penrose a little later sent in his card, she excused herself from seeing him owing to illness. It was the world-old illness, which love creates when it is baffled, buffeted, dishonored, or misunderstood.

John Gordon had not been back to Hope House ten minutes, when Williams called him up and said that Barton was conscious and had called for his friend. Gordon at once went out and was soon by Barton's side.

The nurse and doctor and Harris were there and Gordon knew that Barton's hour had come. The first word that Bar-

ton spoke was a request that he be permitted to talk to Gordon alone.

The others went into the next room, and Gordon kneeled and put his hand on that of his friend.

"John," Barton whispered in his old whimsical manner. "The old cough is like a daily paper, it has the last word. No use to reply or explain. The editor can get back at you in the next number. 'I'm done for,' as the pancake said when it was turned over."

He stopped and with great effort raised up a little. Gordon supported him.

"There, I feel a little easier. I never wanted to die lying down. What I wanted to say, John, there are two letters—love letters—Jolin, from the old lady, Effingham—you remember. They are in my desk. Read them when I am gone. The second one only came this morning. I don't know what is in it. But you—open—and read it."

Gordon was crying. He could not keep back the tears of affection. His love for Barton was almost like that of the love between man and woman.

"Don't cry, John. What's the difference? There's one thing—I hope—you and Luella—the cough's going to get me. Don't let people look at me. I'm not a handsome man as I used to be. There's one thing—"

The voice sank, and yet even in that last struggle the change from his apparent flippancy to the profoundest seriousness was like the change from sun to shade. "One thing, John. Once you said I never loved any one. I've left some books and things to Hope House. There's money enough to bury me—directions in desk—don't have a procession over a

mile long—" the voice came back to its seriousness again. —"You said I never loved any one—Grace Andrews—John—you understand—" The eye spoke the rest. And in the tumultuous grief that flooded John Gordon's soul he filled in the broken gaps of that sorrowful but fragrant romance. The voice was a whisper when it spoke again. "No use, don't tell her—only add to her burden—God bless her—best woman in this city—she—"

The voice went out altogether, and John Gordon realized that the spirit of that brave heart would soon cease from all the earth's struggles. He summoned the doctor again and the nurse and Harris came in. There was nothing to do. Gordon held his hand as the night deepened. Near midnight he rallied and whispered to Gordon with a smile, "I love you, John. Good bye."

At two o'clock his spirit quietly went out like a child falling asleep, and Gordon rose and passed into the other room, trying to realize what all this meant—a richer man for this experience of human friendship, but a poorer man for the loss out of his earth struggle, of one of the bravest, tenderest, truest souls his manhood would ever know.

"Dear David!" he said, and let the tears flow unrestrained. "Your hopeless love story. Hopeless? Did ever man love a woman like Grace Andrews without ennobling himself?" And when a little later, he went in and saw the cold pale face, he thought he could see there the triumph of love's great work in the glory which it always leaves with humanity. For as long as the world shall stand and men shall suffer, so long shall the true love of man for woman redeem the earth from its curse and give to both a place of honor with the divine.

CHAPTER VIII.



JOHN Gordon was reading the two letters that David Barton had received from the old lady, Mrs. Captain George Effingham. The funeral service had been held in obedience to Barton's request. Gordon, Harris, Williams, and a small group of newspaper men had come up to the rooms. Falmouth read a simple service, and he and Gordon and Harris and Williams afterwards went out to the cemetery. When it was all over, Gordon in accordance with his friend's wishes came back to the rooms. Barton's will left most of his personal effects to his friend. The furniture and books he gave to Hope House. A small sum of money was divided among a few of the Colorado people who had been helped by Barton and were still in need.

After Gordon had attended to these simple details, his heart still burning over the events that had become history after the fire, he at last came to Barton's desk and the disposal of its contents. There was almost no correspondence. A simple formal note addressed to Miss Andrews, asked her to accept the furniture, pictures, and books, and use them in whatever way seemed best to her. Any stranger might have written it. As Gordon read the cold formal statement, he said to himself, "She will never know—I suppose it's all right—but oh David—to think of dying of hunger!"

One of the letters from Mrs. Effingham had been opened. It was dated eight days earlier than the other, which had come to Barton on the day of his death, and still remained unopened. The first letter was written in a fine close style but remarkably legible and free from wavering or uncertain endings.

Mr. David Barton.

My Dear Sir.

The promise I made to your friend Mr. Gordon that I would write you after seeing my grandson is a promise I take pleasure in fulfilling herewith.

My grandson has recovered his health to a large degree, but the physicians say he must remain in this climate or he will be in danger of a collapse. This is a disappointment to me personally, as I had hoped to take him back with me to Salem. The Lord and sometimes the physicians know better than we do, and I am resigned to the Lord's will any how, and to the doctors' unless this is a scheme on their part to make something out of my grandson's case. I shall stay here until I find out.

Mr. Barton, sir, words of mine cannot say to you the deep gratitude I feel for the great kindness you showed my poor wandering grandson. When you stopped him that night and put your hand on his shoulder and said a loving word to him, you saved him from something worse than death of the body. He was on the point of cursing God and dying. The Lord bless you, sir, and give you peace.

Now, I realize of course that you are not one to desire reward other than that which comes to every brave soul that does its duty. But I am a rich old woman, with no relatives except this boy out here, and I would count it a great honor to be privileged to do something with a portion of my means, in some way that you might suggest. In a city like yours there are, of course, very many causes that appeal to your humanity. What makes your heart ache the hardest? Let me know where a few thousand dollars will do the most good. I have looked into your face, sir, though you never saw mine, and I know full well that the time here with you is brief. Thank God, sir, it has been brave. When you and I meet on the other side, the fifty and five odd years difference in our lives will not be any gulf between us, for my heart has never grown old, and I shall be rejoiced to count you among the noble friends who have made life worth while. The Captain will be glad to meet you. Tell

him I have not forgotten how he looks and hope he has not changed overmuch!

I am sir, with great respect and gratitude, faithfully yours,
Mrs. Captain George Effingham.

The allusion to the Captain made Gordon smile a little. But his face regained its usual quiet seriousness as he took up the second letter and slowly opened and read it.

Mr. David Barton,

My dear friend,

I hasten at once to answer your reply to my letter, for your words assure me that the days are few for you on the earth. God grant you peace, sir, both of mind and spirit.

What you say about your friend Mr. Gordon, and the work he is doing interests me exceedingly. I have read a little about Miss Andrews and I believe in what she is doing. If either she or Mr. Gordon will write me stating the immediate needs of the settlement I will send something. The only condition I make is a request that my name be not used anywhere in connection with the gift. I don't want to see my name over a doorway, "The Mrs. Captain George Effingham Retreat," or "The Mrs. Captain George Effingham Free Reading Room and Library." Aside from that I don't care what is done with the money. Only I want to know how much will do something, real well. I like the idea of putting it into something that will help children. Why on earth any one wants to live in a city if he can live anywhere else is a puzzle to me, but after they once get there I suppose we can't ask too many questions about it. At least asking the questions will not relieve the situation that has already been made.

I am sure the Captain will be pleased with the use made of his money. If he asks you any questions about it tell him I have saved enough to bury my poor old body decently, and left the house and furnishings to the East India Marine Museum. He need not worry about anything!

If you are not able to answer this, turn the whole matter over to your friend. I shall await a letter from him or from Miss Andrews. The Lord bless you sir, and may He meet you Himself as you pass over.

With respect and affection,

Your friend,

Mrs. Captain George Effingham.

John Gordon re-read this letter with glistening eyes. The hand of David Barton seemed to reach out of the

shadows and grasp his own with his old hearty benignant cheerfulness. "God bless you, David!" Gordon said reverently, as he put the letters in his pocket and hastened down to Hope House to show them to Grace Andrews.

As she read, her blue eyes grew thoughtful. It seemed at last as if some part of her desire for the people was going to be gratified.

"She does not say how much she wants to give," Miss Andrews remarked as she finished reading.

"No, only she says, 'I want to know about how much will do something, real well.'"

"We could use almost any amount," the words were uttered softly and the gaze of the blue eyes was on the scene visible from the library windows.

The district burned over was about three blocks on one side of Hope House and two blocks on the other. Compared with the entire tenement district it was only a black speck on the city map. The people who had been burned out were now crowded into the other tenements. If conditions of overcrowding before the fire were indescribable, they were now beyond endurance even to the wretches who had before endured the indescribable. The city had begun the work of cleaning away the debris in Bowen street, but progress was slow. Carts were going by filled with rubbish. Hope House itself contained still many victims whose condition was so precarious that they could not yet be removed to the hospitals. The resources of the building had been taxed to its extreme limit. But the outside scene was what Miss Andrews saw now with some gleam of promise shining out of those letters. Groups of children gathered over the

burned areas, poking in the ashes or among the bricks and lime for trifles that were eagerly treasured as souvenirs of the tragedy. The whole dreary, dismal, melancholy wretchedness of the scene had not one ray of comfort anywhere, except that which lay in the two letters in her lap. And even with that what could be done?

"If that desert of ashes could be transformed into a Park, Miss Andrews?" Gordon suggested. They had both reached the same conclusion at the same time.

"Parks and Playgrounds, the two sweet 'P's of my life," she said wistfully, "But it would cost—"

"How much do you suppose Mrs. Captain George Effingham is worth?"

"I have no idea, have you?"

"Not the least. Why not write and give her a frank account of the facts? If the old lady wants to add some of the spicy fragrance of life to children, here is her opportunity. Let Ford send her photographs of the burned district, including the swarms of children like those out there now, and let us leave it to her to give what she will."

"That is good. Will you write the letter?"

"No, you write it. She knows you by reputation. I am a nobody to her."

"Very well. I will write the letter. You and Mr. Ford secure the photographs."

Gordon and Ford went out that afternoon and secured several photographs, taken by newspaper men at the time of the fire itself. In two days the group was made up and together with Miss Andrews' letter sent on to Mrs. Captain George Effingham, as strong a plea for parks and play-

grounds as human language and the camera ever presented. Gordon read the letter and marveled at it. It set his heart afire, it made him long for millions to give, to buy up city deserts, and transform them into Paradise. It was the reading of this letter that caused him to wonder with increased wonder at the extravagant and heartless wickedness of a luxurious civilization that spends more on the things it eats that are unnecessary, in one day, than it gives to feed starved childhood in a year. If Jesus were here on the earth again, would he not say to the rich men and women in the cities, "Woe unto you, hypocrites! Calling yourselves, many of you, by my name! Yet living in needless luxury, pampering your bodies, seeking pleasure and ease, while the blood of little children spatters the wheels of your carriages as you drive haughtily through the streets. And ye cry, 'Lord, Lord! Have I not gone to church? Have I not paid the highest pew rent, and attended divine service regularly in my own church, and given something annually to support missions?' Yea, verily! You have done these things, but for every dollar to religion and charitable work, you have spent a hundred fold on your own self-satisfied existence. Verily ye have received your reward. But the time is coming when there shall be weeping and grinding of teeth, when you see little ones you have despised entering into the Kingdom of Heaven and you yourselves shut out, and hear me say, 'Depart from me. I never knew you!'"

Before the letter to the old lady had gone its way to do its errand, while the settlement workers waited in suspense for its results Miss Andrews received a letter by messenger.

She read it and quietly placed it in John Gordon's hands. The letter was from Luella.

My dear Miss Andrews. I enclose a check for one thousand dollars which may be of use to you in relieving some of the distress caused by the recent terrible disaster in Bowen street. I hope to be able soon to add to this. Will you kindly inform Mr. Gordon that my father returned this morning, and is at his office.

With best wishes,

I am heartily yours,

Luella Marsh.

Gordon read the letter through, without looking up. He knew that Miss Andrews had heard of his former relation to Luella, through the sensational accounts printed by the News.

He handed the letter back simply saying,

"The money will be useful just now."

In reality he regarded the gift as conscience money. Luella was disturbed over her father's responsibility for the whole unnecessary horror. She sent a thousand dollars to ease her feelings. But would a hundred or even a million times a thousand dollars ever bring back to life the creatures that went down to death with the tenement? Would it ever restore to health and joy the scores of maimed and broken wretches that lingered on in torture and life long dependence?

His heart was cold towards this woman who had once been dearer than all the world to him. At the same time he knew that the sight of her beautiful face would appeal to the old feelings.

"I am going to see Mr. Marsh," he at last said briefly as if he felt the silence was becoming embarrassing.

"Can you persuade him to give us the site of the double

decker for a part of our proposed park?" Miss Andrews asked calmly.

"I don't know. He has acted the coward in running away. I don't know how deep his feelings have been touched, whether they have worked down to his pocket book or not. But I'll go and see him."

"You will not lose your temper?"

The question came with a quiet tone of gentle caution that Gordon felt sounding in his ears, as he entered Mr. Marsh's office. It guided him with unusual influence, to check the indignant impulse that otherwise might have made him say or do the unnecessary thing.

Mr. Marsh greeted him with evident embarrassment.

"Glad to see you, Gordon," he said, shaking hands cordially.

"Are you?" Gordon thought. But he simply said,

"I don't need to tell you what my errand is, Mr. Marsh."

"That unfortunate fire, I—yes—of course—I know. Business interests called me out of town that morning or I—"

The older man was speaking hastily and his eye wandered uneasily. Gordon wanted to say, "You lie!" but instead he replied,

"Very sorry you had to go away. For many reasons I wish you might have seen some things. There are sights that—"

"For God's sake, Gordon, don't torture me by enumerating them, will you? Just as if I had not seen them in my dreams every night since reading the account!" the man ejaculated. "Of course I lied to you just now. I had no

business to call me out of town. I simply ran away from the horror of the thing, that's all."

John Gordon rose up and his eyes gleamed; but it was with hope.

"Mr. Marsh, the past cannot be changed, but it can be atoned for. What will you do now?"

"I don't know; what can I do?"

"Give us the site of the old dumb bell tenement for a playground; or better still, help us transform the whole of the burned district into a park."

"It will be very expensive—" Mr. Marsh faltered.

"It has already been very expensive in the cost of life. Was Louie's death necessary? Were all those deaths—"

Gordon was beginning to grow excited when the thought of Miss Andrews stopped him. But he had been on a great strain for many days and nights, and this rich man's evident hesitation to incur any financial loss to save life, irritated him. It was maddening to John Gordon to realize, as he had in the short time he had been at Hope House, the misdirected energies of money makers. The love of humanity with which he had begun his knighthood was already such a passion in him, that it leaped with giant bounds over all smaller objects. He was not able to realize the slow steps by which such men as Mr. Marsh have to be coaxed and terrified and even driven, towards a little philanthropy. John Gordon was beginning to have the same absence of feeling for indifference towards social needs, that a perfectly sound physical nature has towards a confirmed dyspeptic or hypochondriac. The logic of the situation around Hope House was so absolutely thought out to John Gordon's mind that any slow, cautious,

hesitating steps towards a conclusion seemed like cold blooded Phariseism.

"I'll do something, of course, I'll do something." Mr. Marsh said apologetically.

"When? What?"

"I suppose—"

Gordon interrupted, not with excitement but calmly.

"This is your life opportunity, Mr. Marsh. Tell me frankly. If you were to donate to Hope House outright the property where No. 91 stood, for park purposes, would it seriously cripple your business?"

"No, I don't think it would cripple me."

"Then will you give us that much?" Gordon asked boldly and almost bluntly. But he was not in any mood to wait or coax.

"Do you know how much that property is worth?"

"No."

"It cost me thirty-two thousand dollars to buy the lots and put up the tenement," Mr. Marsh said imperiously.

John Gordon was silent.

"So that you practically ask me to donate thirty-two thousand dollars to Hope House."

"Minus the insurance on No. 91," said John Gordon quietly.

"It was insured for sixty thousand," Mr. Marsh said, while his face grew a little red.

Gordon made no remark and Mr. Marsh fidgeted in his chair, and drummed with his fingers on the edge of the table.

"Why would it not be better to put up a model tenement on the lots?"

"A park would do more good."

"But the people who were burned out—"

"They must be cared for, that is true. The interest excited by the calamity may lead to the tearing down of other areas and the building of good tenements. But a park, the size of the whole burned area, would be of more value to Hope House than even such a model tenement as you might put up in place of 91."

There was silence again. Mr. Marsh got up and went into the bank. He was gone several minutes. Gordon never moved. When Marsh came back he brought some papers.

"I'll have the property made over to Hope House," he said briefly.

"Thank you," Gordon answered simply, and again there was a silence.

"I want to make some atonement," Marsh spoke slowly. "Do you think this will be so regarded?"

"Yes. It will be a great help to us." Gordon rose and Marsh held out his hand.

"I'll have the business attended to at once. And—and—I'll be down to Hope House sometime this week."

"Thank you. We shall be glad to see you." Gordon spoke gravely, and after shaking hands he went out. As he went down the stairs he had a momentary tinge of remorse at the thought of having done Marsh some injustice, or of having accepted the gift of the property churlishly and in an ungracious spirit.

But as he came back to the scene of the fire he said to himself, "Is it a case for effusive thanks, that this rich man takes a fraction of the wealth that belongs to God, and reluctantly lets humanity get some pleasure out of it? He broke a dozen distinct ordinances relating to tenement house construction, when he ordered No. 91 built. He put up a death trap and received money for its use. He cowardly absented himself from a knowledge of the human misery that his building housed; and when a disaster fell, directly traceable to his own criminal greed he ran away from the horrors for which his own hand was responsible. Was it therefore in order that he, John Gordon, and Hope House and the public, should fall down at the feet of this man, with effusive and extravagant praise, for atoning in a small degree for a tremendous wrong?"

Yet that is what the public, through press and pulpit, did when it was known what Mr. Marsh had done. His act was lauded as "a most noble exhibition of philanthropy." "A splendid example to others." "Fine gift outright to Hope House. Mr. Philo H. Marsh donates \$25,000 worth of valuable property." Mr. Marsh's minister mentioned the gift from the pulpit and took occasion to use the incident to illustrate the growing habit on the part of rich men to give sums of money for philanthropic causes. At what time had that pulpit ever spoken out against the lawless greed which characterized this philanthropist when he allowed his business methods to sink to the level of barter in flesh and blood, because other men did the same and the breaking of ordinances was counted a trivial thing, simply because everybody did it? Is it not time that

the pulpit said something in condemnation of wicked and unchristian ways of making money before it says much more in praise of those who give what they have never rightly earned? A philanthropist is not one who gives money to humanity that he has obtained by wronging humanity; such a man is simply a highwayman giving up a part of the plunder he has iniquitously stolen.

When Gordon reached Hope House he found waiting for him a note from Archie Penrose's aunt, Mrs. Constance Penrose.

Mr. Penrose was a society young man who had no visible means of support aside from the money his father, recently deceased, had left him. Archie Penrose had never made a cent of money by a stroke of labor of any kind. But that was nothing against him in the eyes of fond mothers with marriageable daughters. There were thousands of women in the city who would have counted themselves or their daughters as specially favored if Archie Penrose had come into the house as a suitor. It made no difference that his reputation had suffered in various ways. He had money, he was of a distinguished family, his manners were regarded as elegant, and he had an aunt who gave the most select receptions and entertainments in the city. In the sight of any man or woman of right definitions of manhood, this young figurehead of an aristocratic family was simply one of the ciphers of civilization. He made nothing that added to humanity's comfort or knowledge. He contributed absolutely not one grain of helpfulness or comfort or hope to a suffering struggling needy world. He lived to get all the pleasure he could himself,

much if not all of it gained with a total disregard for any one else's pleasure. And yet he moved through what is called the best society, courted, admired, fawned on, eagerly invited out to an endless round of social functions which a certain class of rich people in America make the most important business of their lives.

Mrs. Constance Penrose was a person of more value than her distinguished nephew. She was rich, but not given over altogether to society and its shallow enthusiasms. There were other things in which she was genuinely interested. And among them was the career of John Gordon. She had known him as a boy, had watched him through his college course and his trip abroad. And being a woman of very decided and individual opinions, she had more than once expressed her interest in the experiment Gordon was making. More than once, she had compared him to her nephew, to that young man's great disadvantage.

The note which Gordon found at Hope House was an invitation to an evening at the Penrose mansion at Park Avenue.

Why have you cut yourself off from all of your former friends? Do you owe nothing to us rich sinners, as well as to the poor ones? Come and reform the boulevard if you are really in the reform business, for we need it as much as the slum. Why are there no social settlements among us? It strikes me that people like your Miss Andrews are living at the wrong end of the problem. If we could only be saved we have the means and ability to save the other end. But I want you to come and see me, and tell me about Miss Andrews. Have you fallen in love with her? And how about Luella? Young man, come and give an account of yourself. Luella will be here, and Mary, and the Lowells, and the Cranstons, and that graceless nephew of mine, who by the way, now that you are out of the way, is paying court to Luella. You have neglected us all shamefully. We will

forgive you if you appear among us again. It will not be a large company, about twenty-five. Surely you have not cut us all out of your acquaintance forever. If you don't care for the rest, come to satisfy my curiosity about your future. You know I was one of your best friends when you were a boy in the University. I have a real interest in your future, and I am not all frivolous or given up to the whirl of the world, as I hope you know. Hoping to see you, I am your friend and well wisher,

Constance Penrose.

Gordon thoughtfully considered the invitation and finally accepted it. When the evening named by Mrs. Penrose came, he went up on the boulevard. There was nothing particularly unusual in the situation, and yet in some unexplained manner as he entered the Penrose mansion, he was conscious of a strange excitement as if before the evening was over, events would occur that would make serious history for more than one of the guests.

Mrs. Penrose met him with a genuine friendliness.

"Ah! Welcome, Mr. Reformer! I appreciate your coming out of your social dungeon to see us. You cannot always be living on heroics. There must be some comedy to relieve the tragedy, eh?"

"Some kinds of tragedy cannot be relieved by any kind of comedy," Gordon replied grimly. "But I'll promise not to talk shop unless I am drawn into it. You didn't ask me to come for that, did you?"

"Didn't I? You are the lion of the occasion. Everybody is talking about you."

"Let us change the subject then."

"And talk of Miss Andrews?"

"No," Gordon said coldly.

"No? Is that forbidden ground—" she spoke seriously.

"I am actually interested in her and in all you are doing. Some time you must tell me, will you?"

"Yes," he answered earnestly, a little ashamed of his curtness. "Of course I believe in it all—only I didn't wish to seem to lug it in on this occasion."

"I understand—" Mrs. Penrose answered brightly. And as Gordon passed on she introduced him to Professor Emory of the University.

Gordon had heard of Professor Emory and had read two of his books. The man was a scholar and had read everything in his own line of sociology. Without meaning to do so, Gordon soon found himself deep in a discussion with the Professor over one phase of the social question, which one of the Professor's books had touched on— "The personal Element of Responsibility for Relief of unjust Social Conditions."

Gordon disagreed totally with the Professor's conclusions, and frankly told him so. The Professor blandly smiled, and laid down another proposition to which Gordon found himself totally opposed. The Professor again smiled, in such an exasperating manner that Gordon almost lost his temper. He pulled up just in time however. He was so near it that he asked a question that otherwise he would not have asked.

"What you say is good theory, Professor. But have you ever lived among the people and studied them at first hand to see if your theory will work?"

The Professor changed color, and lost his bland and condescending manner.

"No, sir, I do not consider that a necessity to the proper

discussion of the facts. I understand perfectly well what you mean. Nearly all Social Settlement residents make the same mistake. They think personal contact is necessary to a clear comprehension of situations. I do not so regard it. Not that I depreciate the service you are rendering—"he added hastily—"but you exaggerate the importance of your contribution to the solution of the problem."

Gordon was spared the temptation of a reply by a voice near by and a hand laid on his shoulder.

"John, must I introduce myself? Why have you neglected us all so shamefully?"

It was his sister Mary who had just come in. Gordon was really delighted to see her. The swift and eventful current of events that flowed around Hope House had carried him along so tumultuously that he had let the old relations with his home drift. And yet, in spite of all that had to be counted into a swift receding past, he could not deny the strength of the blood relationship.

He turned from the Professor with a feeling of relief and began to chat with his sister.

She was the same careless, thoughtless, superficial creature she had always been, and yet she had an affection for her brother that John Gordon felt was very real. It touched him, even while he was wounded by many things she carelessly uttered about his own choice of life.

"Father is not very well," she said in reply to a question. "He fell one day last week and had to be carried home from the office. I feel worried over him sometimes. I wish you were at home again."

"Do you miss me?"

"Do I? You know I do, John. Aren't you coming back ever?"

"I don't know. The old life seems unreal to me."

"Does this seem unreal?" She tapped his arm with her fan and then described a little circle with it that included the rooms and their brilliant contents. "It seems very real to me," she added with a light laugh.

John Gordon let his look go over the interior of that princely residence. All the soft, easy, luxurious appliances of modern civilization within the reach of lavish wealth were evident on every side. Velvet carpets; golden decorations; the most costly pieces of art; wood carving from Bavaria; exquisite medallions, portraits by Sandalio; and paintings, the price of any one of which would have been more than the life earnings of a hundred families in the tenements—before he was aware he was putting flesh and blood values up against all that physical luxury—then he suddenly looked into Mary's face, and said with a smile,

"The things are real enough; it is the life that is unreal."

"Don't be tragic, John," she pouted. "Have some fun to-night. You don't look as if you had been having much lately. Tell me. Is it true that you and Luella have quarreled? Tell me all about it. She is coming to-night. Will it be embarrassing to you?" And then before he could answer she rattled on carelessly,

"And Miss Andrews—the papers say she is a remarkable person. Tell me. Is she handsome, like Luella? Are you impressed? But how do you live in those horrors?"

I should think the sights and smells would be simply— Oh, Miss Cranston, you have met my brother John?"

Miss Cranston had met Mr. Gordon while he was a student in the university. John stood chatting with her awhile and was still talking with her when dinner was announced. He took her out, in obedience to a nod from Mrs. Penrose, and when once at table he looked, quietly enough outwardly, but with inward tumult at the guests and noted Luella seated by young Penrose at the farther end, but facing Gordon, while Penrose was almost wholly obscured by Gordon's right hand neighbor.

The dinner proceeded as usual with such dinners, only the gifted art of being all things to all guests that Mrs. Penrose possessed in such a large degree saving the occasion from the insufferable dullness of many similar gatherings. A seven course dinner in a rich woman's house may and often does afford as much real misery to the assembled company as can well be packed into a bad hour and a half.

With Mrs. Penrose as hostess, affairs went on with more brilliancy. It is one thing to talk yourself and another to get other people to talk. The latter gift, allied to a species of social genius, Mrs. Penrose possessed. And the dinner was progressing finely, seasoned with just that right degree of conversational interest which at times included every one at the table, and then broke up into little groups of talk between two or four.

John Gordon talked with Miss Cranston on a variety of topics, but did not introduce any mention of his own work. Mrs. Penrose, who sat at his right, once or twice

alluded to Gordon's residence at Hope House but he answered briefly, and at once reverted to something else. Evidently he did not intend to be drawn into any discussion or description of his work. Mrs. Penrose was too shrewd, as well as too courteous, to insist in asking questions she plainly saw were not agreeable.

"Very well," she said good-naturedly. "As the lion of the occasion if you will not roar in the presence of this audience will you favor me sometime with what I am dying to know? It is not idle curiosity," she added in a lower tone, "I really am interested in your plans. I want to help."

Gordon looked up at her quickly. The thought of what this woman, with her wealth and social influence might do if she would, to bring life and light into the dead dark places of the city, kindled his imagination. It was another ray of hope to place along side Mrs. Effingham's letters.

"Thank you," he said gratefully. "I will gladly come and talk it all over with you."

As he finished and turned his face again towards Miss Cranston, he encountered Luella's glance. She instantly looked down. Once again, near the close of the dinner, Gordon intercepted her look, as it swept past all the guests, and stayed just a moment with him.

Just how it all happened John Gordon never knew exactly. The last course had been served. There was the inevitable settling back of people who had successfully observed one of the rites of polite society and were ready to enjoy the program of the evening in another stereotyped direction.

The voice of Archie Penrose rose over the well modulated conversation.

"It's a dangerous move for any one to make, I think, Professor. The classes are too much at war now. All these anarchists ought to be hunted out of society like wild beasts. She is encouraging anarchy, when she encourages those people to discuss their views."

"Miss Andrews," the bland voice of Professor Emory smote John Gordon like a blow, "is not encouraging anarchy, Mr. Penrose. You do not understand the exact situation. The men she invites into Hope House to discuss government may be mistaken as to many theories of government, but the free speech that Miss Andrews encourages among them is not dangerous to society. As I understand it she discourages all expressions of violence and is really doing good service to the city, in educating a group of men who might be dangerous, into good citizens."

"Bless you, Professor," John Gordon said to himself. "You are a formal, pedantic, heartless, professional sociologist, with no more real knowledge of the humanity you are writing about, than a mummy, but I'll forgive all that, for what you have just said. You may be of no real account as a sociologist, but you are fair to your own logic, fair as a mathematical problem."

The voice of Archie Penrose rose again. Argument had no weight with him.

"But I say this is a dangerous woman. She makes the people discontented with their surroundings, and creates bitterness between classes."

"I don't agree with you," the Professor's smooth easy

voice answered again. "She is doing great good in her way. Mr. Gordon—" the Professor was sitting three chairs below Gordon on the opposite side of the table, "you are surely in a position to verify my statements about this estimable woman. Set this misguided young man right in the matter. He has been misinformed by some one."

Every face at the table was turned towards John Gordon except Luella's. She looked down at the table. It was very still. Penrose was red and nervous. Just how he had precipitated the discussion, Gordon did not know until several weeks afterwards. It was enough that the entire subject of his personal life work was now at once the object of interest to all these people. It was the last situation in the world he would have chosen for himself, but it had been thrust upon him, through no seeking of his own. In the hush that waited his answer to the Professor, Gordon saw a blue eyed woman digging with bleeding hands at a ruin out of which ghastly faces peered, and it was the vision of a whole life that for fifteen years had flung itself down into the tragedy of humanity to save it regardless of suffering to itself.

"Miss Andrews," he said quietly, but his soul was shaken with the passion of his long repressed feelings, "is to my mind the most gifted, most useful, most Christian woman, in this whole city. She is to-day suffering more, giving more, and doing more to right the wrongs of our boasted civilization, than any other woman of my acquaintance. The man who says she is dangerous to society, does not know what he is saying. Miss Andrews is the superior of every

person here at this table, in all the gifts and graces of the highest developed womanhood."

He need not have said that last sentence. It was not at all necessary. But his spirit was at high tension. The contrast between the selfish, heartless, luxurious, even vicious, social life represented by some of the persons at that table in addition to Archie Penrose, and the patient, loving sacrificing life of the Head of Hope House, voiced his indignant assertion. Luella did not look up. She sat as cold and still as a statue.

Mrs. Penrose, with a tact that did her great credit, broke the silence by asking just the right question. Just what it was, Gordon himself did not remember, when he went all over the scene afterwards; but whatever it was, it led the way naturally to a description of Hope House Settlement, and John Gordon found himself doing what he had declared to Mrs. Penrose he would not do, he was soon pouring out the story of Bowen street and Tommy Randall, and Mrs. Caylor and Louie, and all the heart-breaking conditions of the pale dwellers in the tenements.

Had ever man such an audience? It is not often the Reformer can reach the men and women of society. He talks to the crowd, vaguely conscious all the time that the rich, cultured, leisure classes, either do not care or do not know, or do not understand, and never go to hear him.

But for over half an hour Gordon said his say. He spared not one syllable of horrors. The guests paled at his description of the fire, and shuddered at the picture of the child's arm thrust up out of the ruins and circling Barton's neck in a convulsive death agony. Luella looked

up once. Her eyes glowed with a feeling that John Gordon interpreted into deep compassion, and his heart bounded. For a moment he lost control of himself. Then he went on steadily.

When he was through, Mrs. Penrose quietly signaled for the company to rise. In the other rooms, as the guests seated themselves at card tables for the rest of the evening, different ones took up the topic and a certain unusual hush pervaded the perfumed atmosphere, that was a stranger to the gossiping company.

Mrs. Penrose passed out by Gordon.

"You made a deep impression," she said half admiringly, half seriously. "I had no idea you could talk so well."

"I did not intend—"

"Of course not. All the better. Archie got his answer. So did we." She laughed a little cynically. "It will do us good. Did I not tell you we need reforming? Worse than the slums."

To Gordon's great relief Mary came up, and said she felt uneasy for her father, and begged Mrs. Penrose to excuse her.

"You will go home with me, John, won't you? I came with the Cranstons. Father needs me. He did not look well when he came home this evening."

"It must be serious if Mary is ready to leave this early," he thought. But he was glad to escape the formality of the rest of the evening. As he went out with his sister, he had a view of Luella seated listlessly at one of the tables where young Penrose was.

On the way home Mary seemed uneasy. She was suffering also from a headache and sharply accused her brother of lugging his reform business into the company's talk. John Gordon was silent. Afterwards he learned that young Penrose's attention to Luella was the real source of Mary's bad feelings.

As they mounted the familiar steps, he felt strangely oppressed, as if some new or unexpected trouble was about to come into his life. The excitement incident to his defence of Miss Andrews had given way to a dull depression that weighed him down and gave him a foreboding.

One of the servants was in the hall. He said that Mr. Gordon had gone into the library early in the evening and given orders not to be disturbed.

John and Mary went into the reception room. The library was next. They entered it side by side.

What was that form lying half on the floor, half on one of the leather cushioned chairs?

Gordon sprang forward as Mary cried out. They lifted him and laid him on the couch. A frightened servant appeared at the door. But John Gordon knew as he looked into the stern old face that the soul of Rufus Gordon had gone to God who gave it, to give account of the deeds done in the body, whether they were good or whether they were bad.

CHAPTER IX.

EARTH to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," said Paul Falmouth, as he stood by the grave of Rufus Gordon. "Here to await the general resurrection in the last day, and the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ."

John Gordon with his sister and their aunt, Mrs. Hester Wayland, Rufus Gordon's only sister, stood on the other side of the grave. Mary was heavily dressed in mourning and clung to John Gordon's arm sobbing. Falmouth offered a brief prayer, pronounced the benediction, and then came around to the three and shook hands silently. The crowd of acquaintances that had known the distinguished financier departed, discussing as they went, the future of the business involved by the death, and its relations to the son, who was a stranger to most of the men in the city, except as they had read of his eccentric career at Hope House.

"Strange how a man of Gordon's exact methods can neglect such a thing. I remember now there was Judge Lewis of the Circuit Court neglected"—&c.

"Gordon isn't the first man to put off attending to a matter of that sort. I suppose the estate goes in absence

of a will, to his son?" one of the visiting friends of the broker questioned.

"Yes. And the son is a crank, I'm told. Been living in the slums for a fad." The speaker got into his automobile, and he and his friends were soon speeding towards the city at the rate of thirty miles an hour. Gordon's fad was a slum. The broker's fad was a racing machine. There are "fads" and "fads."

"I think I could give a guess at Gordon's failure to make a will," quietly remarked another "financier," who had been present at the funeral.

His companion gave him a questioning look.

"He didn't have much of anything to will," was the answer.

"How's that?" The exclamation expressed great surprise. "Gordon was one of the solid men of the city."

"It may be. But mark my prophecy. The old man lost his cunning along towards the last. Those who watched him closest saw signs of breaking down in him more than a year ago. He went too heavily into L and D stock. Conway's deal last spring turned out bad for Gordon. No one knows how hard he was hit at the time but—you watch developments. If the son gets the house and lots out of what's left he will do well."

"He was not—"

"The old man was strictly honorable in his relation to all trusts. All he lost was his own so far as that goes. But I am much mistaken if he did not lose just about everything."

During the week that followed, Rufus Gordon's affairs

gradually became common material for gossip on the street. Ten days after the body of the "wealthy banker" had been put in the ground, the business world knew that, with the exception of his home, and a small annuity belonging to his daughter, the wealth of Rufus Gordon had vanished, dissipated in that kind of speculation which borders on gambling so closely, that the most conscientious business men cannot always decide where legitimate business ends, and the gambler's luck begins.

Down at Hope House, Paul Falmouth, who had come in to consult with Miss Andrews about some work his people had volunteered for her, was talking over John Gordon's affairs, when he came into the library. Miss Andrews was called out and the two men were left together. Since Barton's death Gordon had felt drawn towards Falmouth. There was something very wholesome and helpful about the man, when one came to know the real man beneath the scholarly, refined, deeply sensitive nature.

"Then your father's death will really make little difference with your future?"

"Very little if any," Gordon answered gravely. "Mary is going abroad for a year with Aunt Hester. Poor Mary! She is just about broken down with all that has happened."

"Then you will keep on here?"

"Yes. There is nothing else for me to do. Father's business passes into the receiver's hands. Practically all he had, or all we supposed he had, is gone. Aunt Hester will take Mary into her home when they return."

Falmouth was silent a moment. Then he leaned over and put a hand on John Gordon's arm.

"Do you know I have had a great temptation of late, especially since the fire," he was looking out of the window, "to give up my parish and come down here with you?"

Gordon's face lighted up. "That would be a great thing for us! But—"

"But a 'cowardly thing for you to do!' You are right," Falmouth said quietly, "Why should I run away from the hard work where I am? And yet, Gordon, no man knows, unless he has been in the ministry, the enormous demands on the profession. I am not speaking in boastfulness or complaint when I say that no profession requires such constant and varied exercise of all the power of manhood. Do you wonder, Gordon, that the ministry sometimes grows discouraged as it faces a labor that in the nature of the case can never be completed in any sense, and has the vision of an ideal that no church or parish ever yet realized? And then of late, I am haunted by a doubt as to the value of a great deal that I am doing. It is not the hard work I am beginning to dread, it is the fear that it is wasted power, and that the organized church of to-day ought to be changing much of its practice in order to do what Christ wants done."

"Would you mind telling me something in detail what you mean? Give me a page out of your day's work."

Gordon asked with genuine interest. Falmouth was going through a crisis in his church life, and Gordon was beginning to have more than a very strong personal feeling for him.

"It will be talking shop," Falmouth smiled sadly, and hesitated.

"That's pardonable between friends," Gordon answered, with a look that showed the minister a little farther into his affectionate nature.

"Well—you understand all right," with an air of relief. "Take yesterday as an example. The morning started off with a miscellaneous correspondence that took about fifty minutes. Then I worked on my Sunday morning sermon for an hour. At the end of that time I had to leave the study, to hunt up a boy whose mother wrote me about his being sick at a boarding house on Ross street. I had to go in the morning, because of engagements that filled every minute of my afternoons for the next two weeks. I found the young fellow in desperate condition, brought about by his own sin. It was a case that could not be turned over to others. I shall feel obliged to go and see him often, in order to meet the appeal of that mother. Back to my study in time to write a little on an address for next meeting of our local Association. Home to dinner. Funeral at two o'clock. The place happened to be quite near the church, and I was not asked to go out to the cemetery. The people were strangers to me, and were in great trouble. Went back to the study to get word to our visiting committee to see this family as soon as possible. By the time that was done, I started for the county hospital on Burke street to visit one of my church members, very seriously ill there. At five o'clock I was back at the church where a committee of my Endeavor Society had a special meeting to revise their constitution and to plan for the winter's campaign and wanted my presence and advice. Owing to the failure of part of the committee to

be prompt, it was half past six before I left the church. After supper I had a wedding over on Park Avenue. Mrs. Falmouth was unable to go with me on account of the illness of one of our boys. When I left the wedding party it was nine o'clock. As I was getting into the carriage to go home, a messenger boy brought a message asking me to call at the hospital, as my parishioner was in a critical condition and might die before morning. I went at once and stayed until midnight when the patient's condition grew better and I left for home. When I reached home I found my wife sitting up with the boy, who had become quite sick. I sent her to bed and stayed up with the child until he was better. Early this morning I was sent for by the family at whose place the funeral was held, asking me to call this morning as one of the members of the family was in a serious condition. I called and when I got to my study it was after ten o'clock. It is Wednesday and only a part of my next Sunday morning sermon is completed. I have not even selected a text for the evening sermon. The subject of my prayer meeting is "Best Methods of Modern Bible Study." I have partly prepared the service. I have three committee meetings to-morrow afternoon, and an address in the evening on the "Duty of Good Citizens" in the coming municipal campaign. This is before the mass meeting arranged by the committee of fifty. There are five or six families in my parish in great need of my personal visitation, and two deaths occurred yesterday, which means funeral services to-morrow. My assistant has been on the sick list for nearly a month, and the church of course cannot well supply his

place, although volunteers are doing some of his work. I am not complaining, Gordon. I have some of the best men and women in the city in my church membership. They are loyal and true, and any man might well be proud of their friendship. I am not complaining, either, about the bewildering number of calls on my time and sympathy from strangers and people entirely outside of my parish. It is a compliment to the ministry that the unchristian part of the community turns to the church and the preacher for comfort or help. All these things I accepted when I entered the profession. I would be a fool to act the baby, now that heavy burdens of trouble in other people's lives are rolled upon me. It is all a part of the profession which I deliberately chose. A doctor might as well complain that his work brings him face to face all the time with physical pain, as the minister complain that his work brings him constantly into the presence of sin-sickness and spiritual ruin. This is what every true ministry means, and always will mean, and the man who wants to shirk all that, had better never enter the business of preacher and pastor. But the doubt that lately has begun to torment me, is the doubt that all this that I am doing in and through the church is worth while doing through that organization. My ideals are constantly disappointed. With the exception of the minority that can be found in almost every church, I am obliged to confess that my views of the real work a church ought to do are not accepted by my people. And I am going on with the pressure on me of all this miscellaneous machinery of service, tormented with the question, is the church, after all, the best organization for

doing work for humanity, or is the church even approximately doing the things that most need to be done? It is not the service that I shrink from; I am only filled with a great longing to serve, in the place where it will amount to something."

"You are tired out," John Gordon laid his hand affectionately on Paul Falmouth's arm. He did not know just what else to say. His thought of the church had coincided too closely with the minister's to enable him to come to the defense of the church as it seemed to need defense in the face of Falmouth's doubts.

The minister smiled at Gordon rather sadly.

"I may be tired at present. But that does not account for my present position. Don't let it vex you," he added quickly. "I ought not to have delivered my little woe here. This house is the center of its own peculiar sorrows. God forbid that I should introduce into it my own selfish egotism, or even my personal struggles for light in my own darkness."

"Always room for one more, I am sure," Gordon protested, but Falmouth shook his head and refused to continue the discussion. He had risen to go when Miss Andrews entered with a glow on her face that struck both men as a new look.

"Read that!" she said putting a letter into Gordon's hand.

The letter was from Mrs. George Effingham.

My Dear Miss Andrews,

Pardon my delay in answering your beautiful letter. My grandson has been very ill and the care of him has confined me constantly at his bed side. I am not quite as young as I used to be, and begin to feel the weight of my years on my body, though my soul is still fresh and vigorous, thank God.

"So poor Mr. Barton has passed on. I shall enjoy having time enough to make his acquaintance over there. He was a brave and noble soul, and is now enjoying his reward. I do not know that you were at all acquainted with him, of course, but it was as you know, through his correspondence that I first was influenced to think of your particular work as a worthy place into which a little money might go for humanity's sake. In one sense, therefore he is the real donor of whatever seems to come from me.

On condition that my name is not used any where on any buildings that may be erected, and also on condition that the papers do not get hold of the matter, and ask for my photograph with a biographical sketch, I would like to give one hundred thousand dollars to Hope House to use in any way you and your workers think best. When you have used that up, I will give another hundred thousand to be spent in the same or in any other manner you may decide.

Now, my dear friend, don't draw up any resolutions of thanks. Just simply cash the check I have to-day deposited with the Bank of Commerce, and use it as quick as you can, to help those poor little children. I don't see, myself, what you can do to better or brighten their lives very much. You said in your letter to me that the tenement house conditions themselves were getting worse all the time. If you put in parks and playgrounds it will only help the situation in the way of relieving misery. It won't remove the cause of misery, will it? But the Lord knows that in this world of all kinds of trouble, we are to do the best we can under conditions as they are, and hope some time to get deep enough down to humanity's sin and suffering so as to reach the real causes of human trouble and remove them. When we get to that place, I am convinced we shall simply find that God and man have got to work together like good friends to bring about results.

With the best of wishes to you in your noble work and with prayers that those children may have some good times to make up for all they suffer, I am heartily your friend,

Mrs. Captain George Effingham.

John Gordon had read the letter aloud so that Falmouth could hear, as Miss Andrews said she wanted him to know the good news. When Gordon finished, Falmouth exclaimed, "Well if that isn't a tonic to restore one's faith in humanity! Two hundred thousand dollars! Why, Miss Andrews, you can work miracles with all that money!"

"I could use a million without touching much more than the edge of all this misery," she said quickly, and then added with a self accusing tone, "God forgive me! What am I saying! This great gift from this old lady will save hundreds, yes, thousands of lives! We can work miracles with it! We can do wonders, Mr. Gordon."

She was trembling with unusual emotion. It is nothing to be wondering about, good men and women in the cities. This great soul is beginning to see some gleam of light piercing the heavy blackness of childhood, her soul is straining at the thought of the lessening of even some small degree of pain and anguish, as they have smitten her these many, many, dreary years.

"It's like a story," Gordon said, while his eye gleamed and his figure tingled with the excitement of the news. "The first time I saw the old lady I had a dim idea that she was not real but a sort of incarnation of some character in a novel that was too good to be simple fiction. After reading her letters I am sure my theory is true."

"Then maybe the check she mentions as being in the bank is fiction too," Falmouth suggested. "And the next thing you know, the old lady will vanish and you will have to hunt for her in the pages of some colonial romance to which she has returned."

"Heaven forbid!" Gordon answered gravely, as if he actually feared it might be true.

Miss Andrews smiled. "I was in the Bank of Commerce this morning, and was informed of the deposit there. So whether Mrs. Captain George Effingham is real or not,

her check is certified as good for the amount." She laughed at the look of actual relief in John Gordon's face.

"It seems too good to be true," Gordon said returning the laugh. "If I were an author I would put the old lady into a book, if she has not already been immortalized. But you cannot persuade me that she is just ordinary flesh and blood."

Before night every one in Hope House knew of the great gift of two hundred thousand dollars to the settlement. The little group of residents at the supper table was in a fine state of excitement. Plans were discussed for redemption of surroundings that would have shamed the wildest tales of Aladdin and the slaves of the magic lamp. Miss Andrews seated at the head of the table looked ten years younger. One of the young women spoke of it to John Gordon.

"Do you notice how handsome Miss Andrews looks tonight? She must have been a remarkably striking woman ten years ago."

"Not more so than now, do you think?" Gordon did not intend that the Head of the House should hear and supposed that the noise of general conversation at table had made it impossible for her to catch either the question or the answer. But a faint color appeared in Miss Andrews' cheeks as she turned to the young woman and said with a low laugh, "When I was as young as you, my dear Miss Hammond, I assure you I was quite noted for my good looks."

"We all think you have renewed your youth, Miss An-

draws," Gordon spoke, and Ford led off a pleasant ripple of applause by saying "Hear! Hear!"

"Thank you all," the Head of the House seemed genuinely embarrassed, and looked more interesting than ever on account of it. "At this rate, another one hundred thousand dollar gift would put me back into my teens!"

She spoke lightly and her blue eyes filled with wonderful light, so beautiful in its expression of joy over the new opportunity to help suffering humanity that the whole company was affected by it, and for the first time since coming to Hope House, John Gordon found himself asking himself the question whether Miss Andrews had ever had a romance in her life.

The question went without an answer, indeed it was not much more than a vague suggestion prompted by Miss Andrews' appearance during the evening of that eventful day, and the next moment Gordon was busy talking over the innumerable plans and projects eagerly discussed at the table for using to best advantage the wonderful gift from the old sea captain's widow.

"It all comes back to parks and playgrounds," was Miss Andrews' summing up, when they had all had their say about the disposal of the money. "My heart has ached long enough at the sight of childhood's misery. We can lessen its duration even if we cannot remove its cause. I know some of you people have got model tenements on the brain. That's all right and good enough but it's not the end and aim of our work entirely. Let us give starved nature a chance at nature itself. The first hundred thousand for breathing spaces, flowers, water, grass, trees, the

next for buildings, additions to Hope House—what you will.”

So the next day Gordon and Ford with Miss Andrews and Miss Hammond who, next to Miss Andrews, had been longest at Hope House, sat down to make a definite and positive plan for the transformation of the burned out district into an oasis for the desert of Bowen street that still swarmed with wretched and desperate humanity.

The evening that was marked by Hope House as a turning in its affairs large enough to be called a crisis, Mrs. Constance Penrose was having a sharp interview with her nephew, Archie Penrose.

“You are your own master of course,” Mrs. Penrose was saying to her nephew, who lounged carelessly in one of the bow windows of the drawing room, “but at the rate you are going, you will soon exhaust your resources. You are a spendthrift not only of your money but of your health, which is worth more than money.”

“Oh that’s all right, Aunt Constance,” Archie answered yawning. “I know when to stop.”

“Every gambler has said the same thing.”

“I’m no gambler, aunt.”

“You are! You stake your reputation, and the good name of the family, every time you put your health and money up against the world, the flesh, and the devil. If you have no respect for your own name, you ought to have some for mine.”

“What have I done to catch all this?” Archie looked annoyed and also a little afraid. There was one person

in the world who had the power to stir fear in him, and that person was his Aunt Constance.

"You have never done anything. What have you ever done, Archie Penrose, to dignify or ennoble the name you bear? To your father's credit, if he was a money grubber he at least had a business. He actually did something besides hunt for pleasure all the time. You—you have no business. You waste every energy God gave you in senseless expenditure of time and means. And in addition to all the rest, you are fool enough to think Luella Marsh will be the wife of the most useless man in this city."

"If I am a fool to think it, am I a fool to wish for it?"

Mrs. Penrose stared.

"You don't mean to say you actually love Luella?"

"I do. I love her with all my soul."

"That's not saying much. Your soul has been reduced to the smallest common denominator."

"Aunt Constance!" The young man came out from the bow window and stood in front of her, his hands clenched and his eyes angrily blazing. "What right have you to talk so to me? How big is your own soul? What do you ever do for anybody but yourself? When it comes to wasting energy, who wastes more than you in what you call senseless ways? I may be useless and all that but I don't toady to a lot of good for nothings, like the Fourneys, and the Carliles, and the Cranstons, just to get into Washington circles next session." He was treading on dangerous ground now, for he had touched his aunt's real weakness as a society woman, and she was in the mood to be deeply angered at what he said. But he went on

recklessly. And before he finished Mrs. Penrose had settled back again into the easy careless attitude habitual with her.

"I know what you invited the Fournays here for the other night when that ass Emory and Gordon got off their stuff about the slums. But all that is of no account to me. You have no business to interfere with my affairs with Luella. That's my own business. If I can get her consent I am going to marry her."

"It is kind of you to get her consent, Archie," his aunt said with quiet irony.

"You have no right to interfere," he said sullenly. "I don't mind saying I love her, and I am going to have her for my wife if it is possible."

"She will never have you. She loves a far better man than you ever can be, Archie Penrose."

"Who? John Gordon? He's a crank. Luella has broken with him."

"Yes. Her eyes looked it the other night. Did you see how her eyes followed Gordon all the evening?"

Penrose was in a torture of jealousy. He almost cried.

"No. She didn't—I tell you she's broken with him."

"If she has she will never marry you. Luella Marsh has too much sense to put her life into the hands of a man who never lifted his finger to help make a better world."

"You have set me the example by your own conduct," the young man sneered feebly. He walked back into the bow window and sullenly turned his back on his aunt.

"You're right, Archie," she replied calmly. "It's practically a case of pot and kettle. One is as black as the



"My Heart Has Ached Long Enough at the Sight of Childhood's Misery." (See page 209.)

other. The guilt of nearly all unjust and wretched conditions in this city can without doubt be laid at the door of us rich people, who have the power that wealth can use, and use it for our ambitions. It is probably true that the Judgment Day will rightly condemn us as the cause of most of the misery Grace Andrews and John Gordon are living to relieve. We have it absolutely in our power to change political and social conditions, that create nearly all the human wrongs that exist in society, and instead of exercising that great privilege, we go our ways with colossal egotism and monstrous selfishness, shirking all duties and burdens of citizenship, and flinging our money into a riotous and demoralizing luxury of life, that inflames the passions of the poor and keeps constantly in sight the vast inequality of human existence. It is a fact, Archie, that we rich people, with a few noble exceptions so rare as to excite constant newspaper comment, are as a class the cause of practically all the misery of the city. We have no place for service in our program of life. We neither know nor care for the brotherhood. We exist for our own pleasure. And I suppose it will be no more than fair, that in the other world we shall long for a drop of water to cool our tongues while the Lazarus we despised here shall recline in Abraham's bosom. Do you ever think, Archie, of the time coming when things are going to be evened up, when the first shall be last and the last first? Of course God will never permit all this human injustice to continue forever, and He will see to it that our earthly selfishness shall some time or other face some kind of a judgment!"

Archie turned around and laughed. It was a laugh that made his aunt shudder. It was the laugh of society at its worst, the pagan indifference that for all the centuries has faced humanity's woes with dance and jest, and flung to the beggar the crumbs of the feast.

"Well, Aunt, you're a good one! Miss Andrews couldn't do better. Why don't you offer her your services as lecturer? If you got off all that stuff in the drawing rooms it would create a sensation, and of course it would fill the contribution boxes when they were passed for the Cause."

Mrs. Penrose did not answer. She lay back in her chair, her eyes closed, and to Archie's great surprise when she opened her eyes, tears were on the lashes. To his added surprise his aunt rose and went out of the room. She was gone several minutes. When she came back she spoke as if nothing had been said of an unusual nature.

"Miss Marsh and I are going down to Hope House to-morrow afternoon to see Miss Andrews and the place. Will you go with us?"

"To Hope House!"

"I said so. Miss Andrews has invited me to come several times. I contributed a little at the time of the fire. So did Luella. Miss Andrews wants us to see what has been done. I have never been down there. Neither has Luella. Of course you never have. If you care to go, I'll speak for Luella that she will not object to your escort."

"Why—I'll go all right. To-morrow afternoon?"

"Yes. We'll start from here promptly at two."

"All right." He started to go and then hesitated.

"Promise me, Aunt, that you will not prejudice Luella against me."

"No need. You do all that is necessary without any help." She had evidently not forgotten his indictment of her social weakness.

"You'll see. Luella Marsh will be my wife one of these days."

"She has my sympathy when the day arrives."

"Look here, aunt Constance!" he spoke almost brutally, coming back into the room, "If you feel that way, why do you ask me to go with her and you to-morrow?"

"I want you to see some human misery before you die. I want you to know that God has some good reason for the judgment He will some time deliver to your selfish soul."

"How about yours?"

And again he laughed the laugh that centuries of idle society has not been able to soften or civilize.

"And mine too," she answered with a deep gravity that made her nephew stare in astonishment.

"Well, I'll be here at two," he said as he turned from her. "I don't care what your reason is, but I'll go anywhere Luella goes."

When he had gone Mrs. Constance Penrose did a remarkable thing, or at least those who thought they knew her best would have been astonished if they had seen it.

She went into her room and kneeled at a little desk upon which lay an open prayer book. It was opened at the Litany, and with whispering lips she repeated the familiar prayers beginning with the words,

From all evils and mischief; from sin; from the crafts and assaults of the devil; from thy wrath and everlasting damnation,

Good Lord deliver us.

From all blindness of heart; from pride, vainglory and hypocrisy, from envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness,

Good Lord deliver us.

From all inordinate and sinful affections; and from all the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil,

Good Lord deliver us.

From lightning and tempest; from plague, pestilence and from battle and murder and sudden death,

Good Lord deliver us.

From all sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion from all false doctrine, heresy, and schism; from hardness of heart and contempt of thy word and commandment,

Good Lord deliver us.

By the mystery of thy holy Incarnation; by thy holy Nativity and circumcision; by thy Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation,

Good Lord deliver us.

By thine agony and bloody sweat; by thy Cross and Passion, by thy precious death and burial; by thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost,

Good Lord deliver us.

In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our prosperity; in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment,

Good Lord deliver us.

Then turning the page she went on with the words,

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord,
That it may please Thee to succor, help, and comfort all who are in danger, necessity and tribulation.

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord,
That it may please thee to preserve all who travel by land and by water, all women in the perils of childbirth, all sick persons and young children; to show thy pity upon all prisoners and captives.

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord,
That it may please Thee to defend and provide for the father-

less children, and widows, and all who are desolate and oppressed.

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord,
That it may please Thee to have mercy upon all men.

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord,
That it may please Thee to forgive our enemies, persecutors,
and slanderers, and to turn their hearts.

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord,
That it may please Thee to give and preserve to our use the
kindly fruits of the earth, so that in due time we may
enjoy them.

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord,
That it may please Thee to give us true repentance, to forgive
us all our sins, negligences, and ignorances, and to endue
us with the grace of the Holy Spirit to amend our lives
according to Thy holy Word.

We beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord,
Son of God, we beseech Thee to hear us.

Son of God, we beseech Thee to hear us.

O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,

Grant us thy peace,

O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,

Have mercy upon us.

She whispered the words over in a sort of sobbing chant that found her at the close saying, "Have mercy upon me," instead of "us." And with the word she flung her arms over the desk and laid her head down on the book crying convulsively.

The magnificent surroundings of that gorgeously furnished room gleamed all around her as she kneeled there, for the time being as wretched a soul as that sorrow-smitten city housed; sunk in the horrible depth of a self accusation that was already a present day judgment, warning her of a future, and smiting her to the earth with terror at the thought of a whole life time of power misdirected, of a wealth and social influence abused for selfish ends.

When Luella called next day she found Mrs. Penrose in fine spirits. Archie had already arrived and was nervously walking up and down the drawing room.

"There is no question about your love for Luella?" Mrs. Penrose asked as the bell rang and Luella's step was heard in the hall.

Archie gave his aunt a look that made her laugh in his face.

"Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die," she said carelessly, as she turned to greet Luella.

Luella was in a state of unusual excitement. The prospect of seeing John Gordon and Hope House entered into the situation. The prospect of seeing Miss Andrews was perhaps a larger factor. For Penrose had in his fashion, hinted of a possible interest on John Gordon's part towards this gifted woman who had given her life to the people. So for these two reasons, Luella was unusually excited, but in addition was the whole situation, which she realized was not yet by any means decided in her relation to John Gordon. She was apparently no nearer the sacrifice of her social position than when he had made that the test of her love. But none the less certain was it, that she resented as if she had a right to do so, the suggestion that John Gordon might give his love to some other woman, possibly to this one whom she had never seen, whom she was going to see now, why she did not know, aside from a certain curiosity that longed to be satisfied.

As the carriage entered Bowen street all three of them looked with different degrees of interest at the sight of

the double decker. Heaps of rubbish still covered the entire burned area and the same melancholy groups of children were scattered about playing over the ruins. At the farther end of the area some men were taking measurements and talking earnestly. Among the men Luella thought she saw John Gordon.

Going in through the archway which had bent over so much human trouble and sacrifice they were greeted in the broad hall by Miss Andrews herself, who was just passing through to the library, and stopped to greet the visitors as she saw them coming in.

"I am very glad to see you," she said simply as she shook hands with them all. "Will you come into the library? Our little front parlor has been turned into a hospital ward since the fire."

They all went in and sat down while Miss Andrews thanked Luella for her gift saying, "I ought perhaps to have called instead of acknowledging your kindness by letter; but my excuse for not doing so has been the work here."

"Oh, I did not expect anything more," Luella murmured. What was the secret of Grace Andrews' power? She felt something more than common in this woman at once. While she was silently trying to analyze the matter, Mrs. Penrose was asking questions.

"But you have not been here much longer than twelve years?"

"Fifteen years next spring."

"Pardon me, Miss Andrews, are you related to the Clay-Andrews family of Baltimore?"

"Mrs. Hamilton Andrews of Baltimore was my father's own cousin."

"Then you belong to the Claytons of West Virginia?"

"One branch of the Clayton's married into the family."

Mrs. Penrose pushed her inquiries one question farther.

"Wasn't your mother known all through the south as the beautiful Miss Rodney of Baltimore?"

"Yes," Miss Andrews answered quietly. "If you know my family history, Mrs. Penrose, why do you ask me all this?"

The woman of the slums and the woman of the boulevard faced each other, and it was the society woman who felt abashed in the presence of her sister, who had given up so much to gain apparently so little.

"Pardon me, Miss Andrews, now that I have placed you, I cannot help wondering how you came to leave such a splendid social position for—for—

"For such a splendid social opportunity?" Miss Andrews smiled her rare smile. And then in answer to Mrs. Penrose she recited softly George Mac Donald's verses with a power that went deep home to Luella and made even Archie Penrose stop his nervous fidgeting, although he did not comprehend the meaning of the verses to the three women.

I said I will walk in the fields. God said,
Nay, walk in the town.
I said there are no flowers there. He said,
No flowers but a crown.

I said, but the fogs are thick and clouds are veiling the sun.
He answered, but hearts are sick, and souls in the dark undone.

I said, but the skies are black, there is nothing but noise and din.

And He wept as He led me back, There is more,
He said, There is sin.

I said, I shall miss the light, and friends will miss me, they say,
He answered, Choose ye to-night, if I must miss you, or they.

I pleaded for time to be given. He said, Is it hard to decide?
It will not seem hard in heaven to follow the steps of your guide.

There was a moment of intense stillness when she had finished. There was a hint of tears in Mrs. Penrose's eyes. Luella sat with her hands in her lap gazing at Miss Andrews intently. If John Gordon should love this other woman would it not be the simple attraction of one soul that has obeyed the voice that says "follow me," at the cost of physical things, drawing another soul that is also living in obedience to the same voice?

Miss Andrews suddenly rose and went to one of the windows that looked out over the burned district.

"Excuse me, I am of course specially interested in our plans at present. Mr. Gordon with some of the residents has been looking over the ground with reference to our new park. You have heard of our recent good fortune? We are living in a high state of excitement down here. A friend has given us two hundred thousand dollars and we are trying to see how much fun we can have in spending it. If you will come here I can point out our proposed plan, or would you like to go out there? We can look over the house when we come back."

"We shall be interested to go outside and look over the plan there," Mrs. Penrose assented, and they all passed

out and walked slowly down towards the group of men who were at the end of the street, opposite the block that had been the last to burn. As they drew nearer, one of the men left the group and came down towards them. It was John Gordon, and even at that distance, it was very evident that he was unusually roused about something.

He was so absorbed in the matter that was exciting him, that when he met Miss Andrews with her visitors, for the first moment he spoke to her as if he did not recognize the others.

"That scoundrel, Tommy Randall, Miss Andrews! Do you know what he has succeeded in doing?"

He had said that much when he realized who the visitors were. But even then, the passion of the information he had come to give Miss Andrews was so strong, that he simply bowed to Mrs. Penrose and Luella as if he were in the habit of meeting them every day in Bowen street, and nodded to Penrose, as if Penrose was a familiar sight in the neighborhood of Hope House.

"What has Tommy Randall done now?" Miss Andrews questioned with a faint smile. "Tommy Randall does the heavy tragedy in ward 18," she said to Mrs. Penrose.

"Randall has bought up lots all over this burnt district. He has closed contracts for half a dozen double deckers like the one Mr. Marsh had put up," John Gordon continued entirely unmindful of Luella, or at least careless of the effect of what he said upon her. "He has worked all this time we have been discussing the park plan. But how could we do anything!" Gordon spoke in despair, addressing Miss Andrews as if no one else were present.

"We only had the money to purchase anything last night. We never dreamed that anything would get in the way of our purchase of at least half the area. Randall has secured his lots all over the district. If he puts up those double deckers he ought to be arrested for murder. That is what the buildings result in."

Luella flushed and then defiantly looked at Gordon as he unconsciously said the last words looking at her. The expression on her face smote John Gordon into a sudden realization of all his surroundings. Miss Andrews stood quietly gazing over the dreary pile of rubbish. A man left the group at the point where Gordon had been standing, and came walking deliberately towards them.

"It's Tommy Randall. If he attempts to insult you, Miss Andrews—"

As he spoke, Gordon laid his fingers for a second on Miss Andrews' arm. He was standing close by her, and the movement was perfectly natural. Luella noticed it and was also quick to note the color in Miss Andrews' face as she moved a little away from Gordon and said,

"He will not insult me."

"I almost wish he would insult some one so that I could have some excuse for knocking him down," Gordon answered. Neither Miss Andrews nor Luella had ever seen him so angry.

Mrs. Penrose watched all this with gleaming eyes. It had become exceedingly interesting to her. Archie was divided between his disgust at the horrible surroundings, and his wonder at what would be the result of the encounter between Randall and Miss Andrews. Luella had

no thought for anything except that movement which John Gordon had made as if to protect Miss Andrews. And all of them faced the man as he came up, entirely ignorant of his purpose in seeking an interview, but two of them at least fully aware that whatever it was, it concealed some evil, and one of them praying in her great, strong heart for some way of deliverance, that her love for the children of her desolate parish might find expression before God's sunlight and flowers closed to some of them on this earth forever.

CHAPTER X.



WHATEVER else Tommy Randall lacked he did not lack the most absolute confidence in his position as Boss of ward 18. As he came up to the little group of which Miss Andrews was the central figure, not even her thorough knowledge of the man's peculiarly insidious hold on the situation was sufficient to give her a real insight into the motive which prompted him to face her and John Gordon at a moment when he knew their indignation against him was at its highest.

He took off his hat as he bowed.

"How do, Miss Andrews. I've got some good news for you, and thought may be you wouldn't object to my bringing it. Lots 17, 19, and 21 back of the settlement have changed hands since the fire. Maybe you didn't know it, but I have had my eye on those lots for some time. Now I don't mind telling you that I admire your pluck. You've been doing good here. And I want to help in a small way. So I've decided to give the settlement those lots. I understand you've been wanting more room to build on a new hall. This will give you a chance."

He stopped very suddenly and his shifty grey eyes, still fastened on Miss Andrews, had a look of such malignant satisfaction in them that John Gordon wanted to strike

him across the mouth. He did not do that but he did say, as he stepped in front of Miss Andrews directly between her and Randall,

"When we want any donations from you we will let you know it. Better take your gifts where they're better appreciated."

The man gave Gordon one evil look.

"Am I talking to you? My offer was made to the Head of the House. If you are authorized—"

"Miss Andrews is not going to enter into any conversation with you." Gordon spoke with a rising tide of wrath in him that was nearer to actual violence than he had ever been. But the man in front of him was a visible representative of the most corrupt, vicious, damnable, political system that was directly responsible for practically every dwarfed child, every ruined girl, every debauched soul in the District. There was no room left in John Gordon's heart for anything but overwhelming indignation towards the man who stood for all that monstrous wrong. He wanted to strike something. His soul was bursting with compassion for the hundreds of helpless lives in that hell of misery and with supreme anger against the man who got his living out of it.

"O, Mr. Gordon—" Miss Andrews spoke almost timidly. Luella watching every tone and gesture, noted her apparent willingness to let John Gordon have his way. And indeed with the exception of those three words addressed to him Miss Andrews did not speak again during the whole of the strange encounter.

"By your leave, Miss Andrews, I will do the talking,

and unless you say otherwise I will take the whole responsibility of refusing any gifts Mr. Randall may, for his own reasons, make the Settlement. We know perfectly well how lots 17, 19, and 21 changed hands. We do not care to be receivers of stolen goods."

He said the words looking straight into Tommy Randall's face. Tommy Randall knew as he tried to return the look that here was one man who was not afraid of him, come what might. Nevertheless the boss of ward 18 had been ruler so long, he had grown so accustomed to regard the methods by which he extorted revenue from his subjects as a legitimate part of the existing political system, that Gordon's almost brutally frank denunciation caused him only a feeling of contempt.

"Just as you say," he answered coolly enough. "Lots in Hope House block are not given away every day. I know plenty of men who will buy them. I suppose seeing you are so particular about the lots you will be over particular about who gets them."

He said it with a deliberate suggestiveness so full of possible evil, that Gordon was again tempted to knock him down. Nothing but the knowledge of Miss Andrews' presence prevented him. Tommy Randall felt his own power and went a step farther.

"Perhaps you would be interested to look at my plans." The suggestion was so profoundly insolent that no one said a word. Tommy Randall unrolled the blue print and spread it out before them. With the same degree of fascination that they might have felt in looking at a battle field during the slaughter, John Gordon and Grace Andrews

followed the grimy hand of the boss as he described his plan. Mrs. Penrose, Archie, and Luella looked on as interested spectators, but to them, especially to Luella, the main interest of the occasion lay, not in the dirty blue print, but in the expression and attitude of the Settlement workers.

"Here," said Tommy indicating with a much soiled thumb the spot where he and Gordon had been standing when Miss Andrews and her vistsors came out, "is my first building. It is a model tenement, five stories, brick with terra cotta front, all modern improvements. Over here on this corner is to be a saloon and vaudeville. Back here a—. The working men need recreation. No one understands that so well as you do, Miss Andrews. Two blocks west is another tenement. Apartments in these tenements, by the way, are already all spoken for. Corner lot 71, northeast over here, is to be occupied by another saloon and vaudeville. Give the people plenty of amusement. Another tenement over here. Same style and size as first one. Over there—" he shifted the blue print a little and brought the center of the drawing into plainer view—"is going to be a hall which will be used as headquarters for the ward workers, office, restaurant, &c. We need some accommodation of that sort. Down here southwest corner district, another tenement, and Avitzen puts up his saloon here on this corner. Then over here another tenement, same size, same style. These tenements will relieve the congestion now found around Bowen street. I have in contemplation three, four, five, six, possibly seven. Ground will be broke for the first one, over there—" he pointed to the block from

which he had come— “to-morrow. I am planning to get everything enclosed before winter. Pretty good plan, eh?”

Miss Andrews’ blue eyes gazed at him with their profound look of unmeasured sadness. So might an unsullied angel of light have looked upon one who had denied his fellowship with the shining hosts of heaven.

But John Gordon had no history of past defeats and long accumulated wrongs to keep him silent like this woman who knew the utter uselessness of threat or appeal. He was at the white heat of passion and while he held himself in check and spoke coldly enough outwardly, he was really trembling, and Luella began to fear some tragic end to the scene.

“In laying out your measurements for the double decker over there, Mr. Randall, you have not made any allowance for space between front and rear of lot.”

“No,” replied Randall coolly. “We don’t want to waste any ground. It’s too valuable.”

“But how about the city ordinance which provides for a space of twenty-five feet between front and rear houses? I understand your proposed double decker will be four stories in height. The law distinctly says—”

“The law be—”

Mr. Tommy Randall did not say what the law might be, on account of ladies being present, but his abrupt silence was no less expressive. He himself broke it with a coarse laugh.

“Young man, you must be very young not to know that Tommy Randall is a law for himself in ward 18. If he

wants to put up a tenement on the whole lot he does it, and the law ain't going to make no difference."

"You miserable—" John Gordon's wrath flowed over and he took a step towards the Boss. Miss Andrews placed her fingers on his arm as gently and as momentarily as he had placed his on hers and he stopped as if a bar of steel had been flung up in front of him. Luella watching everything with observant eyes saw it all. So did Archie Penrose and his face expressed a sneering sort of pleasure. Tommy Randall held his ground and began to roll up his blue print.

"Well, I must get along back to my work," he said as he gave the whole company a comprehensive look of triumph. "If you want to buy any lots—why—you know where to come. I understand you've got a little money to invest."

"Look here!" Gordon stopped him. "You say you don't care for the law. But I give you warning that I will bring to bear every process known in this city to prevent your violation of these building ordinances."

"Go ahead, young man," said Tommy good naturedly. "I wish you success."

"If there is any such thing as justice left in an American city, I will have it served on you. I will set the whole machinery of the law in motion against you."

"Oh you make me tired, young fellow. What is the law to me? Do you own the courts?"

"No. Do you?"

"Some of 'em." The answer came with absolute effrontery.

"How about Justice Chambers?" Mrs. Penrose asked the question in a sweet voice that startled everybody.

"Justice Chambers? I—I—don't recall—ah, yes. The new justice in district 9." There was a note of uneasiness in Tommy's voice that Gordon was quick to detect.

"Mr. Chambers is a cousin of mine. A very brilliant, rising young lawyer." Mrs. Penrose again spoke in her sweet cultured voice and again everyone, including the Boss, stared at her.

"It makes no difference," The voice of Tommy Randall rose again rough and assertive. "Law or no law I know what I am doing. Good day, Miss Andrews. Sorry you don't see fit to take the lots. I admire your grit." And he undoubtedly did.

He turned and walked back to the workmen engaged in making measurements, and John Gordon turned to Miss Andrews, exclaiming bitterly, "If this had occurred in fiction wouldn't we have laughed at it as wildly improbable? Yet here it occurs in one of the greatest cities on the American Continent and we are obliged to accept it as a part of our municipal system of government. Before God, Miss Andrews, can we do less than vow war on all that such a creature represents? Bear me witness," he exclaimed and he was one of the last men in the world to resort to dramatic poses or heroics, "I will exhaust every resource known to man in an attempt to have Tommy Randall obey the laws of this city. He may have robbed us of our proposed plan for parks and playgrounds, but he shall not murder little children and helpless women in these hells of double deckers."

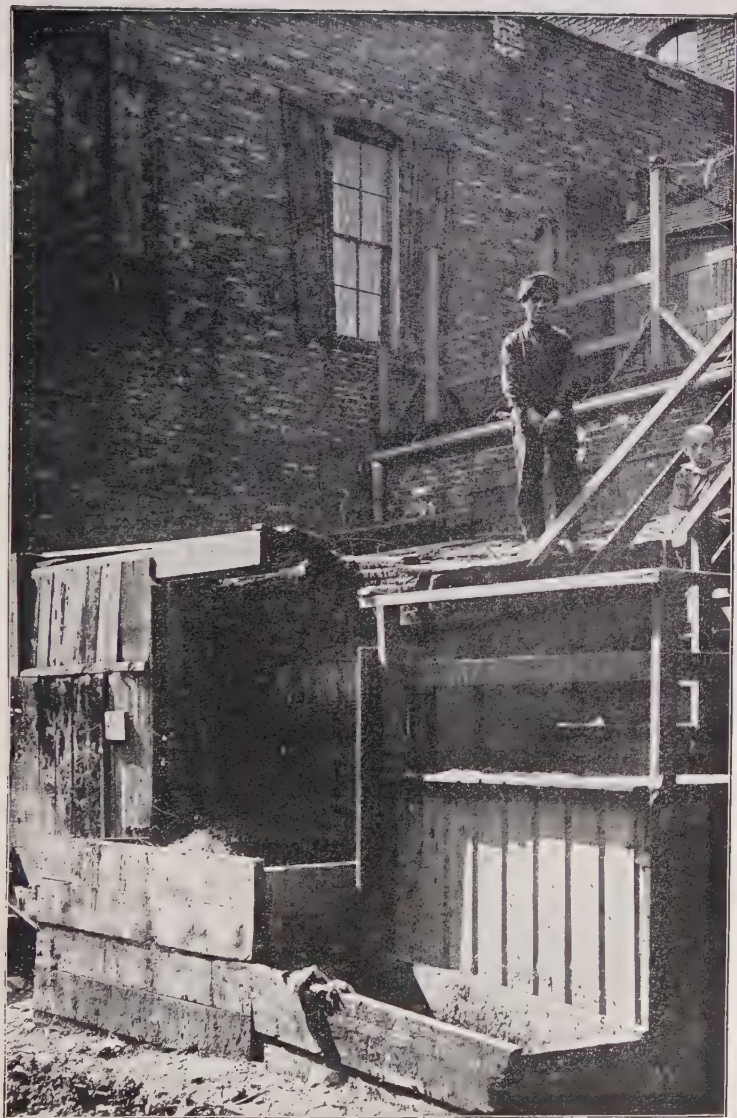
They all walked silently back to Hope House and went into the library.

"I don't think anyone knows the full extent of Tommy Randall's power," Miss Andrews spoke quietly. "I thought once a few years ago that I knew. But I don't. Nobody does. Not even himself."

"Of course you have tried to have these building ordinances obeyed?" Gordon spoke it looking at her in great trouble.

Miss Andrews smiled her patient smile that told the story of countless battles, of countless defeats, of heart-sick failure to arouse a civic conscience, of corrupt courts and packed juries, and the whole city, lying in a contemptuous apathy that owned no god but mammon, and felt no indignation, except that of wrath over the fall of stocks, or the thwarting of personal schemes for glory.

"What can be done?" Gordon asked it, but had no answer. "Of what use is our gift from Mrs. Effingham? Even if Randall would sell the lots he has bought, he would demand outrageous prices that we could not pay. It is maddening to think that he has so chosen the places for his tenements, his saloons, and vaudeville halls, that even if we owned all the rest of the district, we could do comparatively little to carry out our plan. The ward club house means of course, the entrenchment of Tommy Randall in the heart of his territory. Can you think of anything except a spider, who has artfully spun his web, and sits waiting in it for victims? O God of the children! Is there no way in all this great, so called municipality that these wrongs can be righted?"



If Only He Would do His Work in Some Other Place. (See page 238.)

He had never expressed himself so strongly, and Luella looking at him had never felt so much real emotion. She was sitting by the window and as Gordon finished and slowly turned away from Miss Andrews, to whom he had put the question, Luella also turned and glanced out the window.

"Why don't you put the law on him!" Mrs. Penrose exclaimed impatiently. "There must be some way of executing the ordinances of this city."

"I have used every method within my power during the last twelve years to prevent the violation of these city ordinances relating to the tenement house construction. In every instance, without one exception, we have been thwarted when the cases came into court. Mrs. Penrose, you have no conception of the tremendous political and social power back of Tommy Randall. It is an absolute dictatorship. It is true as he unblushingly says, he or the powers back of him, own courts, judges, juries, attorneys. All our appeals to the people themselves have been in vain. As the years have gone on my work has grown to be that of some alleviation of misery; it is not a contribution to the removal of causes. The misery flows on. The best we can do seems to be to make life a little more bearable for children, to put a little light and good cheer into these darkened, saddened lives, to alleviate ever so little their wretchedness. Sometimes I have thought this was all we ever shall do." Miss Andrews spoke with her usual quiet intensity. There was no whining, not even complaint. Simply indomitable patience in the face of everlasting and unrelieved defeat of purposes, by a power so grimly fortified

with money, and social entanglements, and vice, and appeals to all human passions, that it seemed hopeless even to expect relief from its dominating grip on the situation.

"Do you know Julius Chambers?" Mrs. Penrose asked, after a moment of thoughtfulness. During that moment she noted with a gleam of quiet satisfaction, that John Gordon had gone over by the window and was talking in a low tone to Luella, while Archie, who unfortunately had seated himself the other side of Miss Andrews, had the length of the room and the big library table between him and the two at the window.

"I have begun to hear about him, as most of us have done here," Miss Andrews answered.

"Let Mr. Gordon see him. There is some hope in that direction, I believe. Julius was a peculiar fellow in College and Law School. He has got into his present position as you know, through a very unusual set of circumstances and it would be just like him to do something. At any rate he has the ability to do remarkable things."

"It is worth considering," Miss Andrews looked thoughtfully at this woman who had apparently come down to Hope House, like scores of other fine visitors, just to look at a social experiment but with no deeper or more serious purpose. Would Mrs. Penrose go any farther than that? Would she use influence and social place to put a leverage under a wrong, and help overturn it?

Mrs. Penrose slowly and carelessly got up and said, "Archie and I would like to look over the house, Miss Andrews, if you can show us, can you? Come, Archie. Oh, Miss Marsh seems to be interested in her discussion with

Mr. Gordon. He can bring her along with him when they are through. What a delightful old-fashioned hall you have here! I remember hearing my father speak of the time when the Ross family built this mansion. Very interesting."

She preceded Miss Andrews into the hall and beckoned to the disgusted Archie, who did not dare disobey. She slowly inspected the new coffee room and then asked to be shown the recent improvements in the people's assembly hall at the top of the building. She lingered over everything that Miss Andrews had to describe, and it was all of twenty minutes before she entered the library again, the wretched Archie scarcely concealing his jealousy and uneasiness.

In twenty minutes a good deal can be said to affect the future of two people who for various reasons have not fully understood each other and are still conscious of an interest in each other that separation seems to intensify.

"What will you do with the money that has been given you, if you do not succeed in stopping Mr. Randall's building his tenements?" Luella had asked when Gordon had first stepped up to the window near her.

"We shall succeed in stopping him."

"How?"

"I don't know. But if there is a God, and if there is a conscience in this city, and I am spared to do the work God has called me to do, Tommy Randall shall not go on defying all heaven as he has done these many years. Does that sound like boasting, Luella?"

He used her name so naturally that neither gave it any significance at first. Then slowly Luella blushed and

looked down. She had never admired Gordon's manhood more than right then.

"No, I don't think it's boasting. I like to hear you—I mean I like to hear any man speak as if he expected to do great things."

John Gordon bent over a little nearer. Mrs. Penrose had risen and was leading the way with Miss Andrews and Archie out into the hall.

"Luella, is it too late? I have thought—I might possibly have frightened you by too sudden a test—" he spoke hurriedly, then, as he saw the room was empty of any but Luella and himself, he spoke with more reserve, but with more freedom as well, "Luella, I cannot give you up. You see something of our great problem here. It's a gigantic struggle, it is apparently hopeless. But think of the children, Luella, whose lives are at stake. Isn't it worth a life like yours? I never meant to speak like this to you, least of all here. But the sight of your dear face in these surroundings has told me again how much I need you. God surely did not wish us to go on our ways alone. The fight is so hard, Luella, alone. I need companionship."

He laid his fingers gently on her arm as he finished. Luella was leaning towards him. Their faces almost touched. But his action at once brought up to Luella the incident out in Bowen street when he had placed his fingers on Miss Andrew's arm. Was it that or was it some caprice that dangerously dallied with your own happiness, Luella, that made you say,

"Companionship? You seem to be pretty good friends with Miss Andrews!"

John Gordon spoke slowly, and as if he did not understand. "Miss Andrews? Luella, do you—"

He was angry with her. And she was apparently determined not to understand the reason for it.

"She seems to accept your leadership here. You are evidently not alone so far as companionship goes."

She spoke lightly but her jealousy was apparent. John Gordon smiled. Luella cared for him. His anger vanished.

"Miss Andrews and I are good friends. She is a noble woman. There is not a nobler in the city. But—"

"But you are blind not to see that she cares for you—" Luella spoke quickly. Afterwards she regretted that little sentence more than any other.

"Cares for me?" Gordon asked slowly.

"Yes. Any stranger can see it."

"I think you are mistaken. It is impossible."

"Nothing is impossible when people are in love."

"I refuse to discuss the matter. It is not right towards Miss Andrews."

Luella was silent. John Gordon was readjusting his basis of appeal to her. What she had said about Miss Andrews disturbed him tremendously.

"Luella! Can you not see that I—that you—are the one I love? This is the last time I shall speak."

Luella looked out of the window. The most desolate sight she had ever seen was out there. The background for the horrible piles of rubbish was the dismal row of tenements with the back yard staircases like external skeletons proclaiming the degradation of the tenement dwellers, in the tattered clothing hung out to dry. The dreariness

of it all smote Luella like a horror. To live in an eternal conflict with evil like that represented by Tommy Randall; to miss the bright, pretty, comfortable life into which she had been born; to spend her days and nights in trying to love disagreeable, ungrateful humanity—all this seemed like a nightmare to her. Yet there stood the man she loved more than any other, she could not refuse to believe in his nobility, his courage, his unselfishness. Her heart hungered when she thought of all he was compared with the other men she knew. If only he were not living here! If only he would do his work in some other place where they would not always be obliged to look at all this human misery! John Gordon was speaking again.

"Once more, Luella. Will you be my wife? Will you join me in a lifelong battle for human rights?"

"Do you mean as you did before that I must live here?"

"Yes." The answer came without hesitation.

"I don't think I can do it, John. Oh, why do you exact that! You know I love you, John! But I can't, I can't live here!"

"Do you love me?" John Gordon said it gently. "Then can you not trust me—trust all to me? We must live here in order to do the work in the best way."

"Must live here?" Luella did John Gordon injustice again in misinterpreting his emphasis. It was the only time she was ever guilty of such an act but that did not make it any less serious. And again her insane jealousy of Miss Andrews disturbed her vision of the clear eyed love of the man who, she knew well enough, loved herself and her alone.

"It does not seem to me possible to learn the people's needs anywhere so well as here. That does not mean that we must remain here all our lives; but at least for some years."

"I cannot do it," Luella said slowly.

There was a moment of silence. Then the steps of Miss Andrews and Mrs. Penrose and Archie were heard coming through the hall towards the library.

John Gordon did not reply even by a word. He bowed gravely, and turned towards the others as they entered the room.

Mrs. Penrose glanced quickly towards Luella.

"Don't you want to go over the house? It is very interesting."

"I don't believe I care about it to-day. It is getting late and Miss Andrews is busy. I will come down some other time.."

"I shall be glad to welcome you any time." Miss Andrews said in her calm manner. She went to the door with them and said good-bye as they entered the carriage. As it drove away, the last look Luella had of the place framed Miss Andrews and John Gordon standing side by side under the archway. Both faces were serious, and John Gordon's had the look of a man who has entered on a new experience, of which he is in doubt, but concerning which like all brave souls he has no fear.

"Well, I'm mighty glad I got out of it!" said Archie as the carriage turned into one of the paved streets, and the horses hurried on towards Park Avenue.

Luella said nothing and Mrs. Penrose laughed shortly.

"How would you like to live there all the time like Miss Andrews and Mr. Gordon?"

"Catch me. One day is enough, don't you think, Miss Marsh?"

"I don't see how they stand it," Luella managed to murmur.

"Stand it! I want to wash out my mouth with perfumes for a week," said Archie, with an air of disgust. "I feel as if I had breathed in all sorts of diseases."

"It would be healthier for you to keep your mouth shut more of the time, Archie," said his aunt. "That is, healthier for other people," she spoke with a savage disregard of any one's feelings that did not take account of any results to herself. It was that that made Archie fear her.

The carriage rolled along and no one spoke for several minutes. Luella was dumb. She looked out of the window on her side and Archie fidgeted in his corner opposite.

"That's a remarkable situation down there," Mrs. Penrose spoke contemplatively. "Two hundred thousand dollars to spend, and checkmated by Tommy Randall. It looks like a hopeless case for them. Of course he won't sell his lots. Or if he does, it will be at ruinous prices. The devil seems to be on top all around at Hope House. The only chance is that Gordon can in some way bring Randall to time on the ordinance violation. Do you think he will do it?"

"I know he will try," Luella managed to say.

"Try! But will he succeed?"

"He will if any one can."

"It isn't fair to ask him to face all that horror alone. He needs companionship." Luella started. Mrs. Penrose saw it but went on. "He ought to have a wife. Miss Andrews and he seem made for each other, don't you think?"

Luella coldly returned Mrs. Penrose's smile and then looked out of the window again.

"Miss Andrews is only eight or ten years older than Gordon, I should say. But that's no obstacle. I've always held that the woman ought to be older and more experienced at the beginning of marriage. Then the man can catch up, not in age but in everything else. Don't you think so, Luella?"

"I'm not a judge," Luella answered in an icy tone. If the carriage had not been going so fast she would have opened the door and stepped out.

Archie broke in with his drawling note.

"It's easy enough to see that they are good friends. I should say it would make a good match."

Luella was enraged at them both. Mrs. Penrose, whatever her reason for saying what she did, saw that she could not safely go on.

"There's cousin Julius. I believe Gordon can get help there. If he could only bring a case against Randall in Chambers' court, Julius doesn't fear man or devil. It is worth considering."

The carriage drew up at the Penrose mansion. Luella lived three blocks farther down the avenue.

"I'll see Miss Marsh home," said Archie. Mrs. Penrose hesitated a moment as the carriage waited.

"Very well," she said and with a nod to Luella she left the carriage, and Luella and Archie went on.

Luella did not say a word to Archie but stared straight out of the window. When the house was reached she said mechanically, "Will you come in?"

"Thank you, I will be glad to," Archie replied with alacrity.

When they were in the drawing room he gathered up courage to say, "Miss Marsh, will you give me a few minutes to—to make a few remarks?" He did not mean to say that at all. For the first time in his life, he was as near being in love as it was possible for him to be, and in so far as the experience was new to him, he was ennobled by it. Between the two unusual events in his life he presented a curious combination of bashfulness and effrontery. He had chosen the time for telling Luella of his feelings with singular misfortune to himself. He supposed she was smarting from a quarrel of some kind with Gordon. His shallow reason led him to believe that her feelings would be soothed by the devotion of another suitor. And so he blindly went on, gaining confidence as Luella sat perfectly still, her hands in her lap, apparently listening to him.

"Miss Marsh, Luella, it is no secret to you, I am sure, that I have long adored you," he was nearer the truth than was usual for him—"but my devotion will surely count in my favor. Will you—will you entertain the thought of me as a—a—suitor? Will you permit me, Luella, to have some hope of some time winning your affections? I love you truly." He spoke in a sincere manner, for he felt

what he said. "Don't say no to me. Think it over. Give me some hope, Luella—"

He was astonished to see her slowly rise and without even looking at him, without so much as a gesture of any kind, walk out of the room leaving him sitting there on the edge of his chair with his hands clasped in an appealing manner.

He sat back in the chair and waited. At the end of five minutes of blank silence he rose and went out into the hall.

"Please tell Miss Marsh I will call again," he said with a ghastly smile to the footman who was lounging there.

He went out and walked as fast as he was ever known to go to his aunt's. She was in the library and received him good naturedly.

"Well, young man, what did you think—" She stopped as she saw the expression on his face.

"You promised not to get in my way with Miss Marsh! But all your talk in the carriage was arranged to set her against me. I see it! You roused her jealousy by talking about Miss Andrews and all that—"

"What are you saying? You are absolutely unintelligible. Say what you mean!" Mrs. Penrose exclaimed with disdain.

"I am saying what I mean!" Archie traveled up and down the library in a rage. But it was the rage of a disappointed child rather than the anger of a grown up man.

"Oh! I see. You have been talking to Luella. Young man, you couldn't have picked out a more inappropriate occasion. Why, couldn't you see, man, that she was feeling

terribly over something that happened between her and Gordon, while they were in the library?"

"And you aggravated it by all you said afterwards," Archie wailed. Mrs. Penrose smiled sweetly.

"So you actually proposed this afternoon, Archie. Tell me about it. What did she say? How did she receive your remarks?"

"She didn't say anything. She insulted me by leaving the room."

"But it was kind of her to leave you the room, Archie. You must have felt the need of something pretty bad."

"You're a fool," said Archie, and he sat down sulkily in a deep chair and looked defiantly at his aunt.

Mrs. Penrose got up and pointed to the door.

"Young man, you either apologize at once for that remark or you leave this house, and you do not come back into it!"

Archie gathered himself up quickly and stammered, "I—I, forgive me, Aunt Constance! I did not mean that!"

"Of course not. You got your pronouns mixed. What you meant to use was the first personal. With that understanding I accept your apology."

Archie sank back into the chair and Mrs. Penrose at once recovered her equanimity.

"Tell me what you said, Archie. So she never gave you any answer at all. Do you think it is a case of silence gives consent?"

"Hardly," Archie groaned. "I asked her to hear me, to take time to think it over, I did not press the matter. I simply wanted her to consider me as a possible suitor."

"Maybe that's what she left you so suddenly for."

"Why?" asked Archie suspiciously.

"May be she wanted time to think it over."

"Oh! I'm a—"

"That's right, a fool, Archie! Didn't I warn you? You never had any chance. Luella Marsh is deep in love now with John Gordon."

"Why doesn't she marry him then?" Archie asked with directness.

"I don't know," Mrs. Penrose replied thoughtfully.

"I would go anywhere with Luella," Archie groaned.

"Even into Hope House?"

"Yes, I would; even there."

"Then you must be very much in love. Poor Archie!" Mrs. Penrose spoke with a touch of compassion. "It's no use."

"But I tell you, Aunt, I mean to marry Luella Marsh. I don't give up just for one rebuff."

"No? She's never really given you an answer yet, Archie. Make her say no, at least."

"She will say yes at last," said Archie doggedly. His aunt looked at him half contemptuously, half wonderingly.

"Not as long as you are Archie Penrose," she said finally.

"You'll see," Archie said as he rose and went away. Mrs. Penrose thoughtfully sat and mused until dinner was announced.

"I have known stranger events to be," she muttered to herself. "But Luella Marsh is a million times too good for him. Why does she not marry John Gordon if she loves

him? She will miss heaven, here and hereafter, if she doesn't."

John Gordon and Miss Andrews had turned back into the library after the visitors had gone.

"That Mrs. Penrose is quite a remarkable woman, Mr. Gordon. Did I understand that she was a relative of yours?"

"No, she was an intimate friend of my mother. She has always taken a good deal of interest in me. It would not be surprising if she came to our assistance. She has abundant means and leisure. Lives in a palace of a house on Park avenue. Is a widow with no nearer relatives than that Archie Penrose. Her mention of Julius Chambers was encouraging. Oh! if Mrs. Penrose would only use her influence it might move something!" Gordon uttered a groan. "But these society women have no hearts except when they feel remorse. That's her trouble. She may be enthusiastic over a fad like Hope House as she calls it, but it won't last. Her old social ambitions are too strong to be broken or changed into new ones."

"Judge Chambers is a new factor," Miss Andrews spoke softly. "I wonder what he will prove to be. That first act of his when he was seated was encouraging. How would it do to bring a case against Tommy Randall in his court?"

"Just the thing! I don't believe Tommy owns him. We have got to do something, and do it hard. If Tommy Randall puts up those double deckers, contrary to the city ordinances, have we got to confess that there is no such thing as justice in a city like this, in a country like ours,

after twenty centuries of the Christ of God? Oh, Miss Andrews, it cannot be possible that our appeal to the people themselves, in case all other means fail, will also fail. Do you have ultimate hope in the people?"

She turned her blue eyes towards him and they were glistening with tears. Whatever her feeling was towards him, she was one of those great souls who can carry in their hearts a love for one being, and the multitude as well. All true love with her must have been of the highest exaltation.

"I believe in the people at last. If all else fails we will appeal to them. These wrongs cannot go on forever. I cannot believe that God will permit it. Child life must be too precious in His sight."

"And yet think of all these years, of all you have done and suffered—of the thousands of innocent lives that have been smothered and buried alive in these places of horror, do you lose your faith, do you—"

"No, my friend!" She answered smiling. "God is not dead. When I lose faith I shall die. Meanwhile—"

"Meanwhile we are powerless, with all this money in our hands, unless we can stop Randall in some way. Of course he will never sell us the lots. Our only use for the money would be to purchase some of the unburnt territory and tear down. But it would be enormously expensive. The city ought to condemn and buy up all this district and put up municipal tenements. Of course I know you believe in all that. But a city government that produces and nourishes men like Tommy Randall would as soon be expected to open its council meetings with prayer

as to put up city tenements. Our only hope lies in stopping the erection of those double deckers in violation of the ordinance."

Miss Andrews silently looked out of the window. Over at the extreme end of the burned area Tommy Randall with the little group of men was still at work, laying out measurements for the contemplated tenement. It was growing late in the afternoon and the men would soon be going away. Over at the other end of the library, Miss Hammond had been busy at work over one of the lecture programs. She went out as Gordon was speaking about city tenements.

Miss Andrews calmly sat looking at the scene from the window and John Gordon seated a little back from her where, however, he commanded a view of her face as the fading light from the large window fell upon it, suddenly made a resolve that in itself was not really as sudden as it seemed. Sometimes a swift action has ripened under a slow process.

"Miss Andrews."

"Yes."

"Will you allow me to confide in you? Something I feel impelled to say to you especially?"

There was a short silence, then her voice answered quietly,

"Yes."

Gordon went on a little hurriedly as if he feared the loss of the impulse that had prompted him to speak.

"You saw Miss Marsh. You know from the newspaper accounts my former relation to her?"

"I remember."

"I asked her again this afternoon to be my wife and come to live with me here. She refused. Do you think a man in my position, with the life I have chosen to live, ought to ask a woman to come and live with me here, to share all these troubles, to bear all these burdens? Is the test I made for her too severe?"

There was silence. It was broken by the quiet voice.

"Do you still love Miss Marsh?"

"No," answered John Gordon slowly. He was seated and had put his hand over his face.

The group of men over at the end of the view from the window separated and went away. One of the residents came into the library, and started to light the candles which were placed in an old fashioned silver candlestick which always stood in the center of the table. It was one of Miss Andrews' fancies. Candle light she used to say was more literary than electricity.

"Please do not light the candles yet, Miss Farwell," the voice in the window quietly called.

Miss Farwell went out, and in the dark John Gordon could feel his heart beat heavily.

CHAPTER XI.



AFTER awhile Miss Andrews said, "You say no. Do you not mean yes?"

John Gordon lifted up his head. The dusk had deepened and he could see only the outline of her face.

"You have not answered my question, Miss Andrews. Did I do her an injustice when I made it a test of her feeling that she come down here? Ought I to have asked her to do that?"

"Would it be any harder for her to live here than for you, or for me—or—" she spoke hurriedly—"or for any of us?"

"She was born and has been reared in great luxury. Of course coming here would mean a complete change from all that."

"I do not see how you could have asked anything less," the voice came calmly. "The woman who loved you would expect nothing less."

John Gordon did not answer at once.

"Then you think Miss Marsh does not love me?"

"I did not say that. I think she believes she does."

"But do you believe she does?"

"It is not fair to ask me!" she exclaimed with agitation. Then she laughed in her usual happy manner. "Excuse me, Mr. Gordon. I fear I am not competent to answer all your

questions. The realm of love is a realm of mysterious contradictions. I am sure of only one thing. The test you made was not too great. It was the only test possible. I would warn you, however, as your senior by—ten years,—that you do not too hastily judge of your feelings.”

“But supposing—” Gordon went on nervously— “supposing I had begun to feel attracted towards—”

He could not see her face at all now and could only feel that in some way what he said was unwelcome. He did not finish, and in the silence Ford came into the room and lighted the candles. Miss Andrews rose and went over to the table and asked Ford some question about the day’s work, and when dinner was announced a few minutes later, she went out and took her place at the head of the table as usual. When John Gordon came out and took his seat, he saw the placid earnest face heightened perhaps in color, but bearing the usual quiet seriousness that distinguished her.

The talk at table turned upon Tommy Randall and his plans. It was the consensus of opinion that nothing could be done except in the way of enforcing the building ordinances. And everybody agreed that from past attempts the probability was very small that Tommy could ever be convicted.

“For my own satisfaction,” said Gordon after they had discussed every phase of the remarkable situation, “I want to see the Mayor and have a personal interview with him. Let us strike at headquarters.”

Miss Andrews smiled sadly. “Mr. Gordon, youth is always rash.” Gordon colored, as if he understood her to mean it in a double sense. “But go and see the Mayor. I’ve no

objections. Need I say I have seen him several times to no purpose? Has a partisan machine any place in its mechanism for human mercies?"

Gordon felt abashed. "I did not mean to hint that I could do anything. I simply wanted to put the city government to the test in a plain matter of human right and justice. It will be more for my own satisfaction and experience than anything else."

"Go your ways. You will get the experience without fail," answered Miss Andrews with a look which contained a depth of sadness out of her own experience that haunted Gordon all the evening.

Nevertheless the next day he went down to the city hall and asked to see the Mayor. After a delay of half an hour he was admitted. As he entered, four men came out of the room. They were talking excitedly and Gordon could hear the name "Julius Chambers."

"So Julius Chambers is making himself talked about at headquarters." Gordon murmured to himself: "I must know that man."

He was ushered into the Mayor's office by the doorkeeper and faced a slightly built, rather aristocratic looking man, carefully dressed. Gordon had seen him on public occasions but had never before met him personally.

"You are the son of the late Rufus Gordon, eh? Yes. Knew your father quite well. He was a staunch supporter of the party, and a man to be depended upon. Sorry to know of his financial losses just before his death."

The Mayor was a soft, easy spoken man with a slight hesitation at the end of his sentences that gave a listener

the idea of mental indecision, not borne out by his political career.

"What can I do for you?" he said suddenly. Gordon was not prepared for it. The tone was suddenly hard, brisk, businesslike.

"A good deal, Mr. Mayor, if you will."

"That's the usual statement, Mr. Gordon. That's what they all say. Of course you've come to get something. They all do." The Mayor spoke with a tone of resignation that struck Gordon as unusually impersonal.

"Yes, sir, I did come to get something and I have no apologies to offer for it, because it is something that any good citizen ought to get, and that is, justice."

"Be specific. Justice is not delivered here in wholesale lots."

"Is it delivered at all?" Gordon burst out. The Mayor coolly eyed him.

"That depends. State your errand, young man. Others are waiting."

"Do you know Tommy Randall?"

The Mayor raised his eyebrows.

"I know a part of him. Nobody knows all of Tommy."

"He is one of the biggest rascals in this city."

"This is not news." The Mayor looked resigned.

"Yes, Mr. Mayor, it is news to this administration. What is this man, Tommy Randall? He is not an officer of the city, he is not authorized to take part in its affairs, yet he dictates—"

"Be specific. Others are waiting. State your errand, young man." The words came hard, incisive, like the biting

of cold steel on steel. Gordon suddenly pulled up and in five seconds he was as cool and clear headed as the impassive political figure sitting there at his desk.

In a swift forceful manner, that characterized him when driven to it by a hostile listener he pictured Randall's proposed violation of the building ordinance, the long, heart-breaking fight for childhood that Miss Andrews had been making, the gift of the settlement, and Randall's contemptuous defiance of all humanity, in his plan of restoring the regular causes of the people's misery.

He must have stated it wonderfully well, for the Mayor was really interested. Once he interrupted.

"Say that again about the window space required in proportion to floor area. Do you mean to tell me there are three thousand dark bedrooms in the Waterside District?"

"Three thousand two hundred and seventeen, sir. And children rot in them like—"

"Go on," the Mayor said in a low tone.

When Gordon was through, the Mayor was contemplatively silent.

"You've come to the wrong place, Mr. Gordon. I can't do anything to Tommy Randall. What you want to do is to lay a complaint before the City Building Department. The whole business is under their jurisdiction, and properly should come before them. I regret exceedingly to hear what you say about the tenements. I had no idea matters were so bad. Of course the housing problem is a vexed question in all large centers of population and all reformers I believe are agreed that no problem presents so many—"

"Do you claim, Mr. Mayor," Gordon interrupted, but his

blood always boiled up in him when a man lied to him, "that you do not know about the tenement house conditions in Waterside District? Has Miss Andrews told it so badly that you have forgotten it?"

The Mayor's face was dark. He raised his eyes to Gordon but lowered them again.

"You have come to the wrong place to prefer your complaint, sir. Go to the City Building Department. Is that all your errand?"

"It is," replied Gordon and he rose, turned his back on his honor the Mayor, and without another word walked out of the office. Gordon had such supreme contempt for a deliberate liar, that he used to say it choked him to breathe the same air with him in the same room.

At the noon meal he told the story of his interview with the Mayor.

Miss Andrews looked at him quietly.

"The same old story. And now—"

"Now for the City Building Department."

"It's the regular routine. After that the State Board of Health, then the State Factory and Tenement House Inspectors, then—"

She spoke with her usual deliberate patience and Gordon colored.

"I know. I am simply following a better person than myself. But—"

"But you are a man," she said wistfully. "You may succeed with some of them."

John Gordon looked doubtful. But in the afternoon he went down to the City Hall again, and after a long and vexa-

tious delay he managed to get a hearing with one of the officers of the City Building Department. The Superintendent was in Europe. But a deputy listened to him with an air of polite resignation as if he were losing valuable time.

When Gordon was through, he said,

"Oh, Mr. Gordon, that's altogether outside our jurisdiction. You'll have to carry your complaint up before the State Board of Health. I can furnish you with the necessary blanks on which to make complaint. Are you a regular Tenement House inspector?"

"Yes."

"Then possibly you will be required to file your complaint with the Factory and Tenement House Inspector's Commission. Sometimes the complaints are made out to one body, sometimes to another."

"They have complaints then, do they?" asked John Gordon ironically.

"Oh, yes, yes." The deputy replied hurriedly. "Sorry we can't do anything. But the whole affair is outside our department. Glad to have met you. Good day, Mr. Gordon."

Gordon went right over to the room of the State Board of Health.

After the usual delay he was ushered into the office of a nervous little man who said, without turning from his desk at which he was writing,

"Be so kind as to state your business, and be brief as time is precious."

"So is human life!" said Gordon, who had refused the chair at which the officer had nodded when his visitor entered.

The man at the desk jumped as if he had been unexpectedly hit on the back. Then he turned around and looked at Gordon.

"What did you say?"

"You said time was precious, and I said 'so is human life.' Both statements are true, but I think mine is more important."

"Ah, yes, possibly, possibly. Will you state your errand?"

Gordon began, but he had not gone far when the man at the desk interrupted.

"Are you a tenement house inspector?"

"I am."

"Regularly qualified?"

"I am."

"Then you ought to carry this complaint to the Board of State Factory and Tenement Inspection."

"What comes after them?" asked Gordon.

"What?"

"What is the next public body to which I shall be referred after the Factory and Tenement Inspection Body denies its responsibility in the matter?"

The man gravely stared at Gordon.

"Don't let it keep you awake to-night," said Gordon in deep disgust as he went out, and as it was too late to call on the State Factory and Tenement Inspection Body, he went back to Hope House, where he made an attempt to give a humorous account of his afternoon's experience, but dismally failed as he could see by the look on Miss Andrews' face.

He went down to the City Hall next day and found that the State Factory Inspectors met at regular sessions on the

first of the month. From all the knowledge he could gain, he concluded that the delays he would have to endure before that body would consider his complaint, would be so annoying that Tommy Randall would have his double decker all built and inhabited before the red tape had all been unwound from the complaint filed with the department.

He came back to Hope House and had a conference with Miss Andrews.

"I am perfectly satisfied as to this administration," Gordon said speaking with repressed indignation. "They are all a set of political thieves. What do they care for humanity? So far as I can learn, there has never been a conviction during the whole of the present administration for violating tenement house ordinances. There have been numerous complaints filed at different times, but they have all been treated with the most insolent contempt, or politely entered in some department, there to lie untouched. But there is one course open to us now and I'm going to take it."

"Of course I know what you mean. You can carry a complaint directly to the city attorney, have Tommy arrested, and bring the case into the police court. Do you know how many times we have had Tommy arrested?"

Gordon shook his head in surprise.

"Within the last eight years for one thing and another Tommy Randall has been arrested as many as fifteen times, with no result except failure on our part to convict. Do you wonder that we women in Hope House have given up arresting Tommy?"

"It seems to me the person to arrest is the Mayor,"

growled Gordon. "Before God, he is guilty if ever man was."

"Arrest Tommy and bring the case in Julius Chambers court. According to the statute law, the jurisdiction of Chambers' court extends to all cases in Waterside District. Chambers has never had a case of this kind. From all that we know of him so far, he is not afraid of Randall, nor in any way indebted to him."

Gordon gravely assented. He was sitting in the library, where his view through the window extended down Bowen street to the end of the burned district. He could see a group of workmen laying out foundations for Tommy's first double decker.

The sight suggested a plan to Gordon and he went out and walked over to the place.

Tommy Randall was at the farther end of the lot, but as Gordon came up he walked over to the street, and said with cheerful insolence,

"Fine day for building, Mr. Gordon."

Gordon went down to the end of the lot. The basement excavation had been made, and the masons were at work on the foundation wall.

Gordon came back to where Randall still stood.

"Of course you know your rear end line for this building runs fifteen feet farther south than the law allows."

Tommy Randall was chewing a bit of pine splinter. He spit out the piece, then turned towards John Gordon.

"Is this your building that's going up? Don't you worry about me. I know what I'm doing."

Then to Gordon's surprise, Randall came up close to him

and said in what was intended for a bluff hearty manner—"Say, Mr. Gordon. What's the use of quarreling with me over this little matter? Of course I know that technically the ordinance isn't lived up to, but it is practically a dead letter anyhow. None of the contractors ever pays any attention to it. What difference does it make anyhow? I mean to put up a good building and the people know my rents are fair. No one ever complained that Tommy Randall ever screwed 'em for rent when it was hard to get. Live and let live is my motto."

Gordon looked him in the eye.

"Mr. Randall, you know or ought to know that this double decker you are putting up here is a death trap, and that the law distinctly provides for this space at the rear of the lot to give the tenement dwellers sufficient light and air at that end of the building. After you have got your building up it will be a fire trap like old Number 91. You deliberately violate not only the ordinance in regard to rear space, but you are planning to violate other provisions of the building acts in regard to lighting areas, and metal staircases. I've seen your plans and they are nothing more nor less than copies of plans of 91. I'll have you arrested unless you change the ground plans of this building."

"You will, eh?"

Tommy spit out another piece of splinter and contemptuously started down towards the masons. "It ain't the first time I've been arrested but the fellows that does it remember it longer'n I do."

Gordon went over with Ford to the city hall and together they swore out a complaint before the city attorney. That

officer eyed Gordon rather curiously and while his assistant was making out the warrant Gordon asked a few questions.

"This case will come in Judge Chambers' court?"

The assistant looked up and paused in his writing.

The city attorney eyed Gordon again.

"Judge Chambers has jurisdiction in the Waterside District. It has been customary, however, to follow the precedent established by the new Building Act of ninety-seven, and call these cases in the district court."

"Jury case?"

"Yes."

"Am I right in saying that the complaining witness in cases of violation of city ordinances has the right to appear and cause the party complained of to appear in the police court that has jurisdiction in civil cases over the District in which the violation occurs?"

"That is the law—" the city attorney slowly and seemingly with reluctance spoke.

Gordon went one step farther. "Then this warrant will cite Randall to appear before Judge Chambers. If cases that come under the provisions of the Building Act of ninety-seven are appealed from the police court of Judge Chambers do they go to the court of Appeals, or the court of Special Pleas?"

The City Attorney hesitated.

"The court of Appeals. There is no choice in the matter."

Gordon was silent. The city attorney eyed him again with interest.

"Are you a lawyer, young man?"

"No."

"Do you know Tommy Randall intimately?"

"No, do you?"

The city attorney evaded the question.

"He's a bright one, Tommy is. Very bright. Very bright, don't you think?"

"Will this warrant be served at once?" Gordon asked, in his turn ignoring a question.

The attorney placed the warrant in the hands of an officer with instructions to serve it on Tommy Randall at once, and as he gave the order it seemed to Gordon that everybody in the office from the city attorney down to the policemen eyed him with a sort of pitying contempt.

He walked out of the building boiling with wrath at the insolent attitude of every person in the city administration with whom he had come in contact during that week's experience.

"But Chambers seems to be unpopular around here," he said to Ford. "That's hopeful for us, isn't it?"

"How unpopular?"

"Didn't you notice the city attorney's hesitation when Chambers' name was mentioned? And while you were talking, I overheard a little talk between two men at the other end of the office. Chambers' name occurred several times, and it was never spoken of in any complimentary terms. If he is unpopular with the city administration isn't that a good sign for us?"

"Yes. It's a glimmer of hope; but only a glimmer in this awful municipal darkness. We'll follow it though and hope for the best."

Gordon was not present when the officer served the warrant on Tommy, but he learned afterwards that the two regarded the matter as a good joke and adjourned to the nearest saloon to have a drink over it together. When, next morning, Gordon appeared with Ford in Chambers' court in response to the warrant which set nine o'clock as the time, Tommy was there in good spirits, and nodded familiarly to Gordon as he came in.

When the case was called, the three went forward and Gordon noted with deep interest the man who presided and of whom Mrs. Penrose had said, "He does not fear man or devil."

He was almost a youth in appearance. His smooth face had a delicate scholarly look that a pair of gold bowed spectacles emphasized. He seemed strangely out of place in that police court. When he spoke it was in a voice so soft and refined that Gordon was disappointed. His heart sank and at once the glimmer of hope he had allowed his heart to entertain, flickered and went out.

"Who are the prosecuting witnesses in this case?" Chambers said, and Gordon and Ford stepped up. Gordon made his statement and the judge eyed him through his spectacles. Then he turned to Tommy Randall.

"Have you any defense, Mr. Randall?"

"I plead not guilty. My attorney will take the case," said Tommy with a smile.

Then to John Gordon's surprise, a man got up from the front bench and laid a bundle of papers on the rail in front of the judge.

"May it please your honor," he said, "this case is purely

spite work. My client has gained possession, by purchase, of a tract of land that this man Gordon and his companions have been trying to buy for their own uses. They are now trying to stop the building of a model tenement by my client, by swearing out this warrant, charging him with violation of a city ordinance in regard to the space required at the rear of a building lot. We don't deny the ordinance. It explicitly states that if the building is four stories high, there shall be fifteen feet between the rear end of the structure, and the end of lot. But may it please your honor, my client has not violated this ordinance. The diagram here will show that my client has left the required space provided for by the law."

The lawyer unfolded a blue print and spread it out. Gordon looked at Tommy Randall. There was a smile of satisfaction on his face.

"You may see, your honor, for yourself. This plat is the city engineer's. The measurements from Bowen street south on lot are ninety-eight feet in full. My client's building as seen by this contractor's figures and diagram," he opened another paper, "is exactly eighty-three feet, which is just what the law calls for."

"Will the city engineer certify to this statement?" The judge's voice seemed softer and more refined than ever.

"He will if necessary."

"Is he present?"

"We did not think it necessary, your honor. I think he is out of the city at present. But your honor can see that the print is his own official measurements. My client asks that this case be dismissed, as malicious prosecution."

"What have you to say, Mr. Gordon?" The judge turned his spectacled eyes towards him.

"I say he lies," replied Gordon promptly.

"Have you any proofs?" The voice seemed sharper, and the figure straightened up perceptibly.

Gordon hesitated. He began to see through Tommy Randall's scheme. It was not like Tommy Randall to run such a risk, but his whole political life had been such a mesh of lies and deliberate dishonesty that it was not beyond the region of probability for him to resort to a very dangerous and desperate trick to clear himself. Gordon had carefully measured the foundation walls of the double decker and knew that by his measurement they covered the entire lot, yet he had nothing to prove that fact except his own statement.

"Have you any proofs that this statement of Mr. Randall's is a falsehood?"

The voice came again in an added tone of sharpness.

"Nothing but my own word," Gordon answered quietly.

"Have you the measurements you made with you?"

Gordon produced a paper with a rough diagram marked on it, showing the distance from the front of Bowen street to the end of the lot to be ninety-eight feet, and the foundation walls of the building to measure the same distance.

"You've nothing more than this?" the judge asked. His voice was again soft and his manner meditative.

"Nothing more." John Gordon hesitated. "Miss Andrews was with me and Mr. Ford when we took the measurements. She could verify their accuracy."

"Is she here?"

"No. But she could be summoned."

"It isn't necessary. I'll go down there myself and make the measurements. It is possible some mistake has been made by one side or the other. Gentlemen, I desire your attendance while the court adjourns to Bowen street."

If a bomb had exploded in the face of Tommy Randall and his lawyer, they could not have been more thoroughly dumbfounded. The lawyer hastily whispered to his client. Tommy smiled in a ghastly manner.

"It is possible, of course, your honor, that the city engineer has made a mistake in his figures. Mistakes are possible in surveys and measurements, as can be easily shown by reference to official records."

Justice Chambers made no reply. Probably a more speechless group of men never traveled in the electric cars together, than that one which made the trip from the police Judge's court, number 9, to the Waterside district.

When Bowen street was reached, the five men walked over to the site of Tommy's double decker.

Judge Julius Chambers secured a mason's measuring line from one of the workmen. Then he turned somewhat grimly to Tommy Randall.

"I suppose you can trust me to measure correctly?"

Tommy murmured something. So did the attorney. It may be remarked in passing, that it was not exactly a prayer that either man uttered.

Calling one of the masons to help, Judge Chambers measured off the foundation walls. Then he put down some figures on a card. Then he straightened up and said in a peculiarly soft voice,

"I get your measurements, Mr. Gordon, just ninety-eight

feet. Court is adjourned to the station and I desire the attendance of all the parties in the case."

Not a word was said by any one, on the way back. Gordon was singing in his soul a song of hope. Here was a Daniel come to judgment. Whenever before in the history of that city had a public judge or any other ever done a thing like this? The spectacled, soft voiced young man suddenly loomed up before Gordon as a most imposing figure.

Back in court again Judge Julius Chambers, relieving the assistant judge, who had taken his place in his absence confronted the parties in the case. His voice was ringing now. No softness or meditation in his manner.

"Tommy Randall, this court finds you guilty of the charge named in the warrant and I fine you the maximum penalty, which is a fine of three hundred dollars, with an added sentence of sixty days in jail, unless the building is changed in its construction within thirty days to conform to existing ordinances. I may add that while it is possible the city engineer may have made a mistake in his figures, it is my deliberate conviction that a conspiracy of a grave character has been entered into here by you, Mr. Randall, to deceive the court, and if such conspiracy can be shown to exist, as I shall do my utmost to prove, it will be a penitentiary case for both you and your attorney. Call the next case."

Tommy Randall's attorney had a face the color of dirty putty. Tommy himself glared at the judge and then at Gordon. He finally, with a great effort pulled himself together and went out with his lawyer, after the latter had gone through the regular formality of appealing the case to the court of Appeals.

All the way to Hope House, Gordon and Ford felt like executing a dance of some kind in the car. Once in the familiar library they related the whole affair to Miss Andrews and the delighted settlement workers.

"This means the beginning of the end for Tommy Randall," said Ford.

Miss Andrews shook her head.

"Tommy appealed the case. He will get out there. Remember he has never yet been convicted. To-day's experience was only a scratch to him. He has not yet been seriously hurt. You do not know him as I do."

"But Chambers does not intend to let the other matter rest. It was a plain case of conspiracy and deliberate effort to deceive the court."

Miss Andrews shook her head again.

"Tommy is an old fox. He made a mistake in not measuring Judge Chambers aright. But now that he knows him, he will be cautious. I confess I have very little hope of his ultimate conviction."

"But he will have to change the building, won't he?" one of the young women asked.

"It's my opinion the masons will be at work to-morrow just the same, and no change will be made. My dear, you do not know Tommy Randall, nor appreciate his power. I do, to my cost."

In the morning Gordon and Miss Andrews went over to the site of the tenement, accompanied by Ford, Miss Hammond, and nearly all the workers.

The masons had begun their day's work. In answer to

questions they said they had received no orders to change anything.

"It's easy to say, I told you so!" Miss Andrews calmly spoke as the little company slowly went back to the house. "Of course pending the decision of the case in the court of Appeals, Tommy will go on with the building because he feels sure the decision there will reverse Chambers' decision."

"Then I don't see as we can do anything," said Gordon dejectedly.

"Yes, you've done something to get Tommy Randall convicted in any court at all."

"But I don't see that the conviction hurts him any. He ought to be in jail. Instead of that, he's going right on with his lawlessness, just the same as if he hadn't been found guilty at all," said one of the young women.

Gordon looked at Miss Andrews. She smiled sadly.

"Yes," she replied in answer to his question, "Unless Judge Julius Chambers can scotch this viper more seriously than this, I anticipate nothing, except endless delay of the case in the Court of Appeals. There is a case there now, that was appealed by Tommy three years ago. It is a case of law's delay, and we seem powerless to do anything."

"Somehow I have hope in Chambers. Did you see the account in the Index this morning? That sounded like him."

"I saw that." Ford spoke up brightly. "It gave Tommy a great roast, I tell you."

The article referred to in the morning Index, was a conspicuous column account of the conviction of Tommy Randall in public court on a charge sworn out by the Hope House

people. It was a scathing article, written by some one who had dipped his pen in something more than a hired reporter's ink bottle. There was a scorching vigor to it, that drove the fact deep home to the reader, that Tommy Randall was murdering little children in ward 18 by his construction contrary to law, of tenements like the one that made possible the recent tenement house tragedy. The article concluded with these words,

Will the people endure this sort of thing much longer? Tommy Randall is not an abstraction, he is two hundred pounds of coarse flesh and bad blood, which spits on the law and says to the people "You mind your own business." For thirty years Tommy Randall has ruled Waterside District like a tyrant. He has no office in the service of the people. He works at no trade. He is not elected to any position in the city. Yet he has grown rich from his black-mail of saloons, gambling dens, houses of vice, and business firms in the district. His trade is in flesh and blood. No slave driver ever employed more artful means to trap his victims or more brutality in riveting on their manacles. And the horror of the whole affair is intensified by the fact that this creature who is after all the tool of the machine that created him, has actually persuaded the miserable wretches who nourish him, that he is their best friend. There will be no release from this slavery until the machine that made Tommy Randall what he is has been broken in pieces by the people so that it can neither turn out any more product like him, or keep in power what has already been brought into existence. We say, smash the machine. The people are able to do it. Will they do it?

The Review also contained a good account of Tommy's case in the police court, and in addition cited in full the blue print incident and boldly denounced the lawyer and the boss for attempt at conspiracy to deceive the court. Three other papers had more or less extended notice of the event, and all of them were unfavorable to Tommy. This was the more significant as two of the papers had been for the administration.

"There's hope here," Miss Andrews said that evening as the little settlement family was gathered in the family library,

and the accounts in the different papers were being reviewed. "Maybe this is the first murmuring of the people. God grant—"

The bell rang and a visitor was announced.

Mr. Julius Chambers came in and the little company around the table rose to greet him. The slight, pale faced figure with the gold rimmed spectacles was at that moment the most interesting personality, next to their own Head, in all the city. "I've had in mind to come here for some time," he said to Miss Andrews when they were all seated again. "I want to know you and your work at first hand. Unless I am mistaken the storm center of the next campaign will be somewhere in this vicinity."

"Will you be anywhere near the center of that center?" asked Gordon, leaning over and looking at Chambers intently.

"By the grace of God, Mr. Gordon, I want to be as near the center of it as I can get, and nothing would please me more than to have your company."

Gordon tingled all over. He arose and put out his hand. The judge took it. Neither said a word. But from that minute the two men were knit to each other.

They sat late that night around the library table, the most enthusiastic, interested, and in some ways, the most unselfish group of men and women in that city. Gordon and Chambers laid out a plan of campaign. It included the use of every moral and Christian force in the city. And the message they were to bring to the people was the message of murdered childhood, the double decker for a background, the political boss a necessary result of politics that lived on its

spoils, and cared no more for humanity's loss and ruin, than any machine cares for the dust that whirls through its mechanism, to be blown out over the world, or trod under foot to rise and be swept again into the rush of the wheels, that, with metallic heartlessness, grind on doing the will of their maker but caring for no man's soul.

It seemed to them all during the weeks that followed that the city was awakening to some stern reality of its moral obligations. As the young judge had said that night when he appeared at Hope House—"The hour of the people is at hand." He himself, sometimes alone, oftener with Gordon or Falmouth, night after night addressed great mass meetings held under the direction of church, or temperance, or municipal reform bodies. Falmouth and a score of other ministers organized the young people into campaign material. The pulpit began to speak out. The papers contained columns of very free advertising of Tommy Randall and his methods. Chambers' voice spoke through an astonishing number of editorials and other articles, exposing long standing cases of awful incompetency and fraud in the city government. The storm of the people's fury rose and grew with every night's gathering and the storm center was literally the Waterside District. Under the leadership of Gordon, Chambers, and Falmouth, hundreds of business men visited the tenement houses and saw for the first time the horrors that were intensified by the machine. Hundreds of them were taken by Miss Andrews or Gordon, to Tommy Randall's double decker, which had gone steadily up through all the rising of the storm, and the lawlessness of his acts was a visible illustration of the whole situation. Miss Andrews had written to Mrs. Captain

George Effingham, telling her the situation and that old lady had replied, "Use the first hundred thousand if necessary, in carrying on the campaign and the second also. I will try to find some more if you only succeed in cleaning out Mr. Thomas Randall."

So the Settlement workers thanked God and plunged into the thick of the fight as it grew in power, for every saloon interest, every gambling hell, every house of evil fame, fought for their miserable lives. For once almost like magic, to the astonishment of evil all the good of the city appeared to be united, on its knees praying, on its feet working. And as the campaign drew near its climax, every dark and hideous viper that had for years fattened in the security of years of protection from the city, crawled out of its hole and showed its ugly and poisonous front, rearing it against an assault, that for the first time in history was really doing something to vindicate the name of the stern righteousness of God in men.

One morning John Gordon going by Tommy Randall's double decker found it deserted of workmen. It had gone up three stories and a half.

When Miss Andrews heard the news she said, "That means that Tommy is in need of campaign funds. He has spent a fortune already. If that dumb bell is never finished—"

"We will let it stand as a monument of victory," said Gordon.

Two evenings later Gordon, Falmouth, Chambers, and Miss Andrews went together to a monster mass-meeting. All four of them spoke. Miss Andrews was received with a great demonstration. When Chambers spoke it was noticeable that

hundreds of men and women representing the wealth and fashion of the city were there, and that although he uttered the most scathing rebuke of the selfish, wealthy people who shunned all civic responsibility, they listened with positive admiration to a speech that was a torrent of eloquence, for Chambers was an aristocrat himself, and could not be repudiated by any of the city's most cultured or refined circles. Mrs. Penrose was present that night with Luella and Archie. They all heard Miss Andrews with genuine surprise at her ability. Chambers provoked their applause, even while he angered them by his prophet's denunciation of their wicked selfishness. Falmouth's speech was a calm but earnest appeal to the conscience, and every hearer was more honestly thoughtful for it. Then Gordon rose.

He had gained amazingly in the power to address a great crowd. He simply told the story of the tenements out of his own experience. He made no plea, he uttered no denunciation; simply told how childhood was tortured, and crushed, and stifled, and murdered in the double deckers. His story was the story of childhood's rights. It made a tremendous impression. Mrs. Penrose bent her head and her lips whispered the litany.

"Oh, Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world. Have mercy upon me."

Luella never took her eyes off John Gordon's face. As he drew near the end she noted the extreme exhaustion of his whole bearing. And as he finished and sat down she observed Miss Andrews, who was seated behind Gordon, lean forward and ask him something.

Then as the chairman of the meeting was making some

announcement for another gathering, Luella saw Chambers and Falmouth suddenly rise and go over to Gordon, just as he swayed and would have fallen. The two friends caught him and quickly carried him off the stage. Miss Andrews followed them and the great audience began to go out.

Luella hesitated. Mrs. Penrose had not seen anything. She had not been looking.

"I think Mr. Gordon was taken ill," Luella said.

"Shall we wait and inquire?" Mrs. Penrose asked quickly.

"I'll go up and see about it," Archie suddenly volunteered.

He went up and crossed the stage and disappeared. When he came back after a few minutes, he said that Gordon had been removed to Hope House, and no one seemed to know just what the trouble was.

"Nothing serious, I think," Mrs. Penrose remarked. "We'll telephone down, when we get home."

Word was sent back by one of the settlement workers in answer to Mrs. Penrose's inquiry, that Gordon was ill, but it was not possible yet to say how seriously. Mrs. Penrose sent word to Luella and added that if Luella wished, she would go down to Hope House with her next day and inquire. Luella replied that she did not think it necessary and Mrs. Penrose did not press the matter.

But three days later Luella was in the drawing room when a visitor was announced.

"Miss Andrews from Hope House," said the servant.

Luella rose to meet her as she entered. Both women were very grave. Luella trembled as she motioned Grace Andrews to a seat.

CHAPTER XII.



came to tell you, Miss Marsh, that Mr. Gordon is very ill— It is doubtful—”

“That dreadful place and work have killed him!” exclaimed Luella. Her face had paled at sight of Miss Andrews; it blanched now, and her exclamation contained a certain tone of reproach as if the woman in front of her were to blame.

“And if they have, is it not better for him to die there after having fought a good fight for humanity, than to live elsewhere and carry no burdens that kill?”

It was a question provoked by the entire social cruelty of that world represented by such women as Luella and Mrs. Penrose. The gentle, patient, sacrificing spirit of the blue-eyed woman who had given her whole life to lift on the human burden, burst out of its habitual repression of feeling and swept up and over Luella, as if she were the incarnation of social selfishness which in all the great cities of the world seeks ease, and pleasure, and luxury, and denies all claims of brotherhood, refuses to share its strength with the weak, and never dreams of such a thing as personal responsibility for childhood's ways or mankind's suffering.

It seemed a long time that Luella was silent. After a while she raised her eyes to Miss Andrews.

"I am all that you think I am. And yet—"

"And yet, Miss Marsh, John Gordon loves you. He wants to see you before he—"

"Did he send you here?"

"No. But I know he longs to see you. Will you come?"

"Yes," Luella trembled. "But I am sure he does not love me! Oh, Miss Andrews! Have pity on me! If I loved him truly would I refuse to accept his test for me? Why do I shrink from that?"

"Do you expect me to answer all the contradictions of your heart? You have been born into a social life that reckons up its wealth in physical things. It is also true, pardon me for saying it, but it is true that you women of wealth and social activities are as a class destitute of any real love for humanity. You can feel remorse or momentary pity. You will weep at the representation of wrongs on the stage, in a well lighted, warmed, and upholstered theatre, from a comfortable seat for which you have paid an exorbitant price, but you will not take the price of that seat, and go with it yourself to a real human sufferer, or if you do it, it is in a spasmodic effort to relieve a dull day, or a compound with a conscience that will not always leave you alone in your selfishness. The broad basic element of genuine love of humanity is not known by you or by women like you. The richest, most cultured, most favored women in this city are as a rule destitute of real human love to the masses. They are born without it, they live without it, and may God have mercy on them, they will die without it, and receive the final condemnation spoken to those who, like the rich man in Jesus' story, have their good things in this world but will be shut out by an

impassable chasm from the joys of Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham."

Again the spirit of this woman, who had for all those dreary years of lonesome burden bearing felt the crushing weight of a proud city's wealth and fashion which lifted no finger to help in proportion to its enormous responsibility, rose up and flowed over its life long repression, in the presence of a woman who had refused the great love of a great man, because she did not want to miss the things that Lazarus had to do without.

And again Luella was painfully still. She uttered no denial, she apparently did not resent a syllable. She simply looked down, folding her hands in her lap, and Miss Andrews gazing at her could see no sign of anger or pride.

But suddenly Luella rose, and stretching out her hands towards her visitor, she said, while tears were in her eyes,

"All this may be true—but you say he is dying—is it the time to say all this to me now? I love him! I do love him! You do not, or you would not be saying these things to me now—while he is dying!"

She came up close to Miss Andrews and stood near her, with her hands clenched and her whole attitude expressive of the deepest feeling. "It is no wonder John Gordon loved her," Grace Andrews said to herself with a pang at the thought of a beauty that had been dulled by years of contact with trouble, for Luella was magnificent in her strong young womanhood, and it needed only that one human love for the multitude, to make her a creature of boundless affections worthy of the bravest, best man that ever lived.

"I did not say he was dying. He is very ill. The issue is

doubtful. But he is perfectly conscious and it may be—it may be—that your presence will help him.”

“Come then, let us go,” said Luella.

On the way to Hope House Luella asked again if John Gordon had sent for her.

“He has spoken your name,” Miss Andrews hesitated. “But he has not asked to see you.”

“Then I am going to see him on your invitation?”

“Yes,” she replied simply.

“He will not care to see me,” Luella spoke as if to herself, and Miss Andrews did not reply to her.

When they reached the house, Luella was so agitated that she asked to be left alone in the library a little while. When she came to Miss Andrews and told her she was ready, Miss Andrews could not avoid almost a feeling of pity for her.

“Is he very ill?” Luella asked.

“You must be prepared for a great change in him,” Miss Andrews said. When she reached Gordon’s room, Ford came to the door. He had been nursing Gordon. When Luella entered, Ford and Miss Andrews went out and knew that as they left the room Luella had kneeled at the side of the bed and put her lips on John Gordon’s hand.

She was not prepared for the sight of such a change in so short a time. But Gordon had thrown himself into the problem of Hope House, from the first day of his residence, with a whole souled abandon that had told tremendously on his vitality. The daily strain on his sympathies, the apparent hopelessness of the effort to remove causes, the unceasing call on heart and mind, had burned like a fever in his life, and when the city campaign came on he was not at all prepared

for its incessant demand on physical and mental resources. Nevertheless he had flung all caution aside night after night, even when he felt growing on him the weariness that like a leaden weight hung on heart and brain. The collapse came inevitably, and his condition was critical. It was the old story of driving the machine beyond its powers, and without sufficient care for the delicate mechanism of nerves and heart and tissues.

"John," said Luella as she kneeled there, and he felt a tear fall on the hand she held, "you do not doubt my love for you, do you? Why did you not send for me yourself?"

"You are here, Luella— That is all I want."

He spoke with great effort. He was conscious of a weakness that made him cling to any strong nature like a drowning man. His whole interview with Luella must be interpreted in the light of that weakness—his mind was feeling vaguely for relief from a dark, hopeless falling down into some unreachable place where Luella could not come. He had not strength even to return the clasp of her cold fingers, and she was terrified as she saw his helplessness, and thought he might pass away even during the brief time she felt she ought to be there with him.

"Promise me, Luella, that you will—will—be my wife. Let us give ourselves to the cause of childhood suffering—in these—these—awful places—"

"Oh, I promise, yes, yes, John. Dear, I will come here and live anywhere—anywhere—if you will not die—"

She clung to his hand and he smiled.

"Will you live with me here, Luella—here in Hope House—"

"Yes! Yes! For I do love you, I do love you, John!" She cried, sobbing, and he lay so still, so exhausted with his effort that she rose at once and going to the door called for Miss Andrews and Ford to come, thinking he had fallen into the sleep that knows no waking. But when they came they saw a smile on his face and a look of peace there that was more hopeful, Ford said, than anything yet recorded.

Even as they all three stood by him he opened his eyes and whispered,

"Will you kiss me, Luella? I am happy—"

She leaned over and kissed his lips and there was a look on her face, which neither Miss Andrews nor Ford understood until after events made it clear.

She went back into the library and sat there for some time dreading to have news brought her that he had sunk into death. But Ford came in after awhile and said he was asleep, and while at the farthest degree of mental and heart exhaustion, there was a fighting chance.

So Luella went home, and the next few weeks she passed in a suspense of feeling that left with her an experience impossible to describe. Every day she either went to Hope House or heard from there. When she went herself she did not ask to see him. The delirium of brain fever was on him and he knew no one, not even Ford. Luella shrank from going into the room. Once she looked in through the open door. Then she passed along back into the library, and tears ran down her face as she went and sat down near the large window overlooking the scene of the fire.

Miss Andrews came in and found her looking out at the place. Most of the rubbish had been removed and half a

dozen saloons had gone up on as many corners. Tommy Randall's double decker was unfinished, and its incomplete condition added to the general dreary hideousness of the prospect. Luella shuddered at it all.

"Is there any prospect of getting this property for your proposed park?" she asked as Miss Andrews came over by the window.

"We do not know yet. You have heard the news of Randall's conviction in the court of special pleas? Mr. Chambers succeeded in furnishing proof of conspiracy, and it looks very much as if Randall's day was over. The election next week will decide his fate. It looks now as if the present administration would be defeated, and the Reform Party elect a full ticket. In that case the boss will have to go. He has already disposed of several lots around the double-decker, and it looks very much as if he was getting ready to leave the city, if the election goes against him. It all turns on that issue."

Luella looked wearily out of the window. Then she turned to Miss Andrews.

"When did the doctor say the—the—crisis for Mr. Gordon would be reached?"

"In about a week," Miss Andrews answered gently. Her whole face and manner betrayed the nervous strain under which she had been living. Luella, who had come to know her as once was not possible, admired and wondered whenever this remarkable woman was near her.

"Will the fever leave him any—"

"I think not. Of course he will be very weak for a long time. But he will have hope to sustain him, and—and your promise." Miss Andrews added with an effort. "Forgive

me, Miss Marsh. I overheard your promise to him. It probably saved his life."

"Do you think it did?" Luella asked faintly. She shuddered again and turned her eyes out of the window, and was silent a long time. Miss Andrews possessed the quality of keeping still and did not return to say anything more. After a while Luella said, "Let us pray God that all may be well—with him when the crisis comes."

"Yes, please God." Miss Andrews whispered. Then she went out of the library and shortly after, Luella went home.

When she came into the house she found Mrs. Penrose waiting to see her.

"How is Mr. Gordon?" Mrs. Penrose asked the moment Luella stepped into the drawing room.

Luella told her.

"Then he is not out of danger?"

"No. The crisis will come next week."

"Do you care very much, Luella?" Mrs. Penrose asked somewhat carelessly.

Luella did not answer.

"If he gets well what then? Will you marry him?"

Still Luella did not answer. Mrs. Penrose eyed her sharply.

"You are unhappy, Luella. Is it because you are afraid he will die, or—"

Luella looked up.

"If he lives will you marry him?" Mrs. Penrose persisted.

"I promised him that I would, and that I would live with him in Hope House. But—" Mrs. Penrose was watching her closely. Luella was in need of a confessor and she went

on, "But I cannot live there. I promised because I thought he was dying—I was carried away by my feelings—if I try to live there with him I should be wretched and make his life miserable."

"So you have decided to make his life miserable by not living with him. That's good feminine logic. For getting into real dilemmas commend me to a woman. The graceful thing for him to do would be to die. It would at least save you the awkward business of explaining away your promise to him. I don't envy you your interview with him if he lives. I'd sooner go and live in Hope House all my life."

"Don't!" cried Luella. She walked up and down the room like a man, Mrs. Penrose watching her curiously.

"Of course you never really loved John Gordon. If you had, no question of Hope House would ever have risen. Seeing you have never yet loved any one, maybe you will allow me to present the name of a suitor?"

Luella stopped in her walk and faced Mrs. Penrose angrily. Mrs. Penrose continued in the sweetest manner,

"Archie claims your attention. He has wearied me with his persistent appeals for my pleading in his behalf. And this seems as good a time as any to bring his claims forward. You are not going to marry John Gordon. Therefore marry somebody. And it cannot be denied that Archie is somebody, at least in his own estimation. He has money, he is no worse than a good many other young men like him, and he will not ask you to live in Hope House. What more could you ask, Luella? And what more could I say? It is not every day that one has an offer of marriage from such a young man as Archie. The occasion will never come again."

Mrs. Penrose spoke with a smile that could be interpreted as meaning any one of half a dozen things.

"Stop!" cried Luella. "Never mention Archie Penrose's name to me again. If he were the only man in the universe I would never marry him!"

"And yet—" continued Mrs. Penrose slowly—"you throw away, like an old shoe, the true love of a good man, simply because you are not willing to give up a few of the flesh pots of civilization. Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher. Yet we prize these vanities beyond the best thing in the world which, no doubt, is love."

"Oh, do not talk to me any more!" cried Luella. She resumed her walk and Mrs. Penrose placidly resumed her talk.

"Now that I have done my duty by my nephew at his request, I am going to plead the cause of John Gordon, though he has not asked me to. Luella, do you realize what you are going to fling out of your life, if you go to John Gordon and tell him in cold blood that you lied to him, when you promised to be his wife? He is a young man of splendid ability and spotless character. He has chosen a career that is unselfish, noble, and full of possibilities. As his wife you could share in his struggles, but no less also in his triumphs. The whole social question is at the front in our Republic. Men who, like John Gordon, stand up for the rights of humanity, especially the rights of childhood, are bound to command a hearing from the world. You are missing the rarest opportunity a woman ever had to ally herself with a man who has something in his plan of life worthy of effort. What will you have to give up? A few baubles that make the physical life a little softer and a few that civilized power can get along

without, and in the most cases be the better for not having. For these baubles you are going to commit an act of deliberate murder of the best feeling a woman ever had, murder of love for a true man. He is perfectly right to demand that you live with him in Hope House. You would have every reason to despise him, if he did not ask that of you. A man who has a great lifework like John Gordon's, could not ask any woman to share it with him, who did not gladly accept all that went with it. Remember, Luella, my married life!" Mrs. Penrose was speaking with deep earnestness; she had been leaning forward, all her usual careless reckless manner gone completely. "I married for money. I was poor, I longed for the physical softness of things. I need not tell you, Luella, that my marriage was a failure, so far as love is concerned. I got the money: I missed the love. What has it been worth? The poorest mother in the city, struggling with saddest poverty, but sure of the love of her husband and children has been heavenly happy compared with me. I? I never had a home. I had an establishment. I am a homeless woman. I shall grow old and die without ever having known the earthly joy of a home. Luella, do you choose to be one of the army of homeless women in the cities? The poor envy our fine houses, our swell turnouts, our luxuries, our leisure, our dinners, our dresses, our money. They envy hell, for that is what it all means when love is absent. John Gordon offers you heaven, Luella. You choose the other place, if you refuse him. You are mad to refuse him, Luella. You will live to regret it in time and eternity."

"Oh, do not talk to me any more. I am miserable

over it!" Luella nearly lost all control. She threw herself down on a couch and buried her head in the cushions.

Mrs. Penrose got up and looked at her sternly.

"I almost wish John Gordon may not live, for your sake as well as his," she said. Luella shuddered and Mrs. Penrose after a pause went out of the room.

The crisis for John Gordon came on the night of the election day. To Ford and the others who watched by him that night it seemed as if the struggle being fought out in the city was typified by the struggle going on in John Gordon's room. Rumors of the political battle drifted into Hope House all day. Both sides were confident. Both sides claimed a victory. It was righteousness against all forms of evil that had grown secure and insolent, but was now alarmed and fighting for future existence. Tommy Randall typified the entire city administration. He had used enormous sums of money. The Tenement District almost solidly voted for him against the friends who like Miss Andrews lived to better their condition. The whole thing illustrated magnificently the regular social degradation of American civic life.

As night deepened and returns began to come in slowly there seemed to be no decisive indications for either side. Ford, who had been with Gordon from the beginning, refused to leave although he was thoroughly exhausted. Gordon sank lower and lower. Twice they thought he had passed on. Each time he rallied. At two o'clock he was nearer death than he had ever been. From that time on the struggle of life for the spirit grew stronger. When

dawn came, the doctor lifted his hand and a grim smile expressed his satisfaction. The crisis was passed and John Gordon, by the grace of God, was to live and struggle on for a few years more before his spirit should go to God who gave it.

Out in Bowen street and around Hope House the boys were crying out special election editions. Miss Andrews and Ford could hear the words "Victory for Reform Ticket!" "Triumph for law and Order!" "Chambers elected City Attorney." Ford stole down-stairs and got a paper. The little family of residents gathered in the library. The first questions asked were about John Gordon.

"The doctor says he'll live. Hurrah!" Ford cried feebly. He waved the paper as if that was the special news that covered its first page with heavy type and exclamation points. Some one discovered Miss Andrews over by the window, with tears on her face. Miss Hammond came up and put an arm about her.

"Grand, isn't it?" Miss Hammond said.

"Yes. It did not seem possible in the night that he could live."

"Who? Tommy Randall?"

Miss Hammond asked demurely.

Miss Andrews laughed.

"I am rather unstrung by all this," she said.

"It is a good deal, isn't it? Tommy's death and Mr. Gordon's life at the same time. But joy never kills, does it?"

"It has never killed Miss Andrews yet," said Ford.

"But I don't know how she will stand all this. I'm afraid it will go hard with her."

"I will try to accustom myself to it," the Head of the House answered, smiling on them all. At the breakfast table no one ever remembered to have seen her more interesting or fascinating.

John Gordon rapidly grew stronger. When once life had claimed him, it seemed as if all the forces of good came to his assistance.

One day when he had become strong enough he listened with the greatest delight to Ford's account of the election.

"Chambers is going to make history for the double decker fellows. There are over a hundred cases filed already. The atmosphere around the end of Bowen street is of a dark blue. Tommy Randall has skipped out for his health and carried with him the boodle he was careful not to use for campaign purposes. The property out here including his unfinished building has all passed into other hands, and the city is likely to take measures towards condemnation and purchase. Of course that means lots of legislation and law's delays and so forth, but the gang is out of the city halls, and Chambers and his gold bowed spectacles will move things as rapidly as the law permits, which to my mind is not fast enough to set anything afire. At the next election the city ought to make Chambers a King and give him absolute authority to do as he pleases for the good of the city. But I tell you, Gordon, you missed a mighty good fight by being here the week before the election."

"So did you, my dear fellow, from what I hear of you," said Gordon affectionately.

"Oh, I had a good fight over you," said Ford. "There were also others. Miss Marsh came down or sent word every day. We were all determined not to let you die. But 'twas a good fight. I'm about used up. I turn you over to Miss Marsh."

"I'm sorry to miss you, Ford," Gordon laughed lightly. "I've no fault to find."

"I understand. You simply want a better looking nurse around. Don't blame you," said Ford who was uncommonly homely and not at all sensitive over it.

"I did not say so," replied Gordon laughing again. He was light hearted. The world seemed good to him. The victory of the righteous forces in the city, the defeat of Tommy Randall, the prospect for the future, and above all the thought of Luella filled him with joy. Life was worth living after all. There would always be battle, but victory was possible. Always sorrow and trouble, but God was not dead. Every minute brought healing to him. When, a few days after, Miss Andrews told him that Miss Marsh was in the house he felt almost equal to his old time enthusiasm.

He was up and dressed, sitting by his window, which overlooked the same prospect as that commanded by the library window down-stairs, when Luella stepped into the room.

She had put off coming to see him as long as possible. When she had no more excuses to offer she went down to Hope House. Gordon of course asked to see her. He was growing strong so fast that there was no reason why he should not see her.

She came slowly into the room and he started to rise and

walk towards her; but he was not equal to it and sank back, smiling at her and not noting, in his effort, the very grave look in her face.

"I have been told I need another nurse, Luella! But I will promise not to be—"

He noted her look and instantly felt troubled by it. She had come up to his chair and put out her hand. He had bent over and placed his lips on it and felt it to be trembling and cold.

"What is the matter? You are ill?"

"No. But John—"

She sat down near him and covered her face. John Gordon sat very still. He did not break the silence.

"Oh, let us not—do not ask me to—you are not strong enough—it is cruel in me to come to you in this way—but I am not able to act a part—"

"What is it?" he asked quietly. She looked up. He was gazing at her so gently, so lovingly that she was deeply moved. She rose and kneeled down by him and let him put his hands over hers.

"John," she exclaimed wildly. "Is it right that I should make you unhappy all your life?"

"There is only one way you can do that."

"Yes. But it is not the way you mean. It is the way I mean. If I should be your wife and come here to live, I should be acting a part I am not made to act. It would be unfair to you. When you began to realize the impossibility of it for me, then your unhappiness would begin."

"Your promise—" John Gordon began, while his eyes

sought to dwell on hers and then wandered away to the window.

"My promise! Oh, it was given when I thought you were dying. You cannot know the agony I have suffered! John, tell me you despise me. What a contradiction I am to myself, to you, to everybody."

"There are no contradictions in true love," said John Gordon gently. He removed his hands from hers, and turned his face away. She slowly rose and stood looking out of the window.

"It is that! that!" she exclaimed passionately, pointing at the view from the window. "It would kill me, all that dreary, hideous, unattractive, horrible humanity with its miserable, sordid, mean, selfish life. To dwell with it, to neighbor it—I cannot—I cannot—it would be a sin for me to pretend that I could be happy in that kind of a life."

"And yet," said John Gordon looking at her with a new look, in which pity for her predominated more than any feeling for himself, "And yet it is the kind of humanity that the Son of God came to save. I am sorry for you, Luella. God help you."

She turned towards him swiftly. Something in his tone reminded her of something Mrs. Penrose had said.

"It is too late. I was born as I am." Then she came nearer. "Do you forgive me, for bringing you this unhappiness? Will you forget me?"

"I will forgive," he said simply.

"You will also forget in time," she replied, after a pause. He did not answer and she walked slowly towards the door. There she turned and looked back at him. He was look-



"It is That, That!" She Exclaimed, Passionately. (See page 292.)

ing out of the window gravely. His face thin and pale, ennobled in every line by suffering and service seemed to her for a moment to be more than earthly in its beauty and power. She hesitated. What she was renouncing began to be dimly made real to her. And yet to lose the things—

Slowly she turned her head, and opened the door, stepped out into the hall, shut the door, and went down into the library. With a sense of relief she found the room empty and quietly went out of the archway and back to her father's house.

But the man she had left had cried her name just as she closed the door. It was just one cry. Then he struggled down upon his knees and for a time his soul beat about in the dark for help, crying and sobbing in its poor human weakness over what was gone. Finally God drew near and comforted him. When he got up again he felt something like a sudden illumination of his spirit. This woman—was she not right? How could two walk together except they were agreed? Could love hesitate or doubt, or be uncertain over the future, and be love? Did he care for a heart that must be driven to his by force, or lured to it by pity? Was the hunger of life ever satisfied with the husks of reality? Up from the lowly place of his spirit's depression he rose step by step until he rested his affections in his growing faith that the future would satisfy him with a human love that knew no such thing as doubt or fear.

During the day that followed this growing strength that looked into the future with confidence, he had several interviews with friends who came to Hope House to congratulate

him on his recovery, and talk over the work of the settlement.

Among these callers one day was Mr. Marsh.

"Gordon," he said frankly after he had expressed his interest in the proposed use of the property he had turned over to the Settlement. "I am deeply sorry that you and Luella have decided to go your ways apart. She needs just your strength. She is going to lead a life of aimless effort."

"It is best as it is, sir," Gordon had answered.

"There is no possibility of any reconciliation then?"

"No. We have not quarreled. We have simply understood. There can be no other way for her or me."

"I am sorry," Mr. Marsh sighed. "She needed you and so do I."

He spoke wistfully. Gordon read in it a whole history of human weakness, struggling up towards light and strength.

He put his hand into the older man's.

"If my friendship is of any value to you, Mr. Marsh, you have it."

Marsh went away, and Gordon mused over his future. How far would the man use his wealth, his education, his responsibility to help the weak and overcome his horror of humanity's sin and trouble because he learned to love instead of tremble?

Paul Falmouth was a welcome visitor. He was much encouraged over the results of the city campaign.

"I learned my share from it," he said after giving Gordon his experience with young people's civic league in his church. "The church is not all bad. There is great hope in its young life. There is where I am going to put my

own strength and enthusiasm. I have stopped preaching great sermons to old people. I have begun to teach my children. I have begun to learn that the office of the ministry is not to draw the crowd but to instruct a handful and make disciples. Gordon, I see some hopeful signs in the church of the future."

"Glad to hear it." Gordon answered gladly. "I always believed the church contained leaven. There is always hope for any institution that has leaven in it."

"The leaven of the church of this century is its children," the minister said and went his way, leaving Gordon to muse over the power of that force that represented through all the ages the love of Jesus, an organization obscured and at times almost extinct, but glowing yet with an inward illumination that has not forgotten the commands of a Master who loved the church and gave Himself for it, that he might sanctify it and make of it an institution at last, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

Mrs. Penrose was one of Gordon's most interesting visitors. She came in and chatted familiarly and at times flip-pantly of all things on earth and under heaven. At last she said suddenly,

"So Luella has got her flesh pots. They contain bitter brew for her. Are you satisfied?"

"There was nothing else for her to do." Gordon answered after a moment's silence.

"You're going to grow better for it. She's going to grow worse. I did my best for you."

"Thank you," Gordon answered simply.

"Archie tried again the other day. He will never make

another attempt. I have advised him to go abroad. He sails next month."

Gordon made no reply. Mrs. Penrose sighed.

"Why don't you and Miss Andrews—"

Gordon gave her a look that stopped her.

"Pardon me. Go on with your good work for the children. Let me come down once in a while and help. I'm not altogether bad, Gordon. Simply born so. But life's a dreary sort of jumble to me. I made my choice. Good-bye. Best wishes to you."

When she was gone, Gordon hesitatingly to himself lifted the curtain of her future as it might be. It was a future of contradictions. Poor, wasted life of an immortal spirit! How you have missed, and shall miss forever the joys of triumphant womanhood! Poor, pitiable creature! Homeless! Childless! No two words in all human speech can more deeply describe your poverty, your loneliness!

Julius Chambers was one of the most welcome callers as Gordon daily grew stronger and more buoyant.

"The city is looking up," he said in his cultured voice. "This housing problem is something tremendous. It will simply have to come to cheap transportation, city own the means, condemn all this property, tear down, build up, make suburban residence possible for the poor, in short we've got a dozen questions in one, involved in the tenement problem. But I'm hopeful. The business men are getting waked up. Best of all the saloon is getting a lot of free advertising. The cranks are right as they have been all the time, and we've got to come to it—wipe out the saloon, put a home in its place, that's the only substitute worth any-

thing. Public entertainment halls, resorts, gymnasiums, libraries, parks, bath-houses, all that, good as 'tis, cannot equal a good home. The salvation of the city lies in its ability to build up Christian homes. That's civic reform in a sentence."

He stayed longer than Ford said was good for Gordon. But Gordon said he was a tonic and when he was gone, he stretched himself, got up, walked across his room exulting in his returning strength and when Ford came in and began to expostulate, Gordon laughed.

"You don't dare let me hit you," he said facing Ford sturdily.

Ford looked at him critically, then backed off to a safe distance.

"Don't believe I will risk it with a man who helped knock out Tommy Randall."

"Not yet," Gordon answered gently. "We've got our life work cut out for us, Ford. This is only the beginning."

Miss Andrews came in. They were in the library now, for Gordon had been down-stairs for one of his meals.

"A letter from Mrs. Captain George Effingham," she said with a smile, handing the letter to Gordon.

It was a hearty message of good cheer from the old lady to all the settlement workers, especially to Gordon, whom it congratulated on his recovery. She commended the use of her money in the campaign, and promised a hundred thousand dollars more towards the proposed park, or towards the education of public sentiment for removing the saloon.

"Let us get at some of the causes of human sin and misery," she wrote. "I am willing to give money to relieve misery; but I would much rather remove causes. I don't want to think the money goes all the time for remedies. I would like to think some of it goes to preventives."

Gordon sat by the window reading. When he finished, he looked up and Miss Andrews was standing near. Ford and the others were at the table.

"You are feeling quite well again, Mr. Gordon?"

"Yes, I am getting eager to go out again. I long to be at work."

She glanced at him and buried something quietly in a very deep grave beyond all resurrection.

"You are going to grow strong with work," she said.

"Yes." He turned his face from her to the window. "It will be my life to work for the people."

* * * * *

The city stretched out before him as when he left his father's house, full of human weakness, power, struggle, defeat, sin, selfishness. In a very positive but not by any means fully defined manner he began to feel his way with this age-old problem of humanity. He realized that he had by no means served his apprenticeship. Please God if he were granted twenty years of vigor he would learn something of the ways of men, and be used if God willed it to play his part manfully in the never ceasing drama. He thanked heaven that his love for the people was more sane and more passionate, too, than ever. There was also an abiding peace in his soul as he marshaled up for review all the possible forces of righteousness in the city, sometimes

sleeping, apathetic, indifferent, but always to be reckoned with. And it ever stirred his soul that the world had not yet grown deaf to the cry of children, nor its heart become cold to the sorrows of the poor. Hope was strong in him as he felt his life forces pulsing anew, summoning him to conflict for human rights, for a city of God on the earth. And he stretched out his arms towards the people he could see through the window saying, "Let us love one another, and all things will be possible."

Thus John Gordon as he resolutely faced his future, enshrined the people in his holy of holies, as the current of their lives bore him on, their destinies irrevocably woven into his own.

THE END.

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